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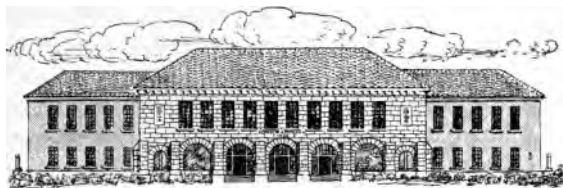
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THE FIRST
SCHOOL
YEAR

KATHERINE
❖❖❖ BEEBE

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The First School Year

FOR PRIMARY WORKERS

BY

KATHERINE BEEBE



CHICAGO NEW YORK
WERNER SCHOOL BOOK COMPANY

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The First Sch. Year

FEB 13 1900



Foreword.

The several chapters of "The First School Year" appeared as a series of articles in "The Kindergarten Magazine" for 1894-5. They were designed to meet an often expressed wish on the part of primary teachers for a definite presentation and practical application of Froebel's principles to every-day school work. They have been carefully revised for publication and are now submitted in book form to primary teachers in the hope and belief that the valuable hints and suggestions which they contain will be found both practical and helpful.

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Chapter 1.

PLAYS, GAMES AND SONGS.



SCHOOL has begun. You, a conscientious teacher, fresh from a summer school, perhaps, at least rested and refreshed by your vacation and full of new enthusiasms, are once more in possession of a roomful of restless bodies, growing minds, and unfolding souls. You believe with all your heart and mind that the kindergarten spirit and principle ought to pervade the schoolroom, and you know that these are the vital somethings that lie back of folded papers, clay birds' nests, and building blocks, and you mean to apply kindergarten principles, as far as you know them, to all your first-grade work.

Here is your problem: Given fifty children, more or less, and one teacher eager to apply the newest and best educational

thought in teaching them the three R's; how shall it be done?

One thing is certain; you must have the whole child with you if any kind of good work is to be accomplished. This means that not only the child's body must be present in the schoolroom, that his mind must in some degree be responsive to yours, but that the soul of the child, the feeling, willing, motive-making part of him, must be with you also. For his own good you want him to do certain things. You have the power to make him do them; that is, you can control his body and, in a degree, his mind, by virtue of the authority vested in you as teacher; but the soul of the child, the part that makes him want to do the thing that should be done, must be won. It cannot be driven or coerced in any way. Authority cannot reach it, but it comes forth gladly, more than half way, in response to the teacher who has the heaven-given power of drawing it to herself.

It is so common a thing to see a child in school in the body only that we have ceased

to notice it, the rest of him roaming far afield, God knows where, creating a world of his own more in accord with child-nature than the every-day schoolroom. "Johnny is a good boy," the teacher says, "but very dreamy. He does not learn very quickly. I think I will have to put him back with the C class."

When a teacher, by reason of inspiration or good training, brings to her children the right thing, they respond so freely and fully that half in ecstasy, half in despair, she exclaims, "Why cannot they always be like this?" If they could, the millennium would indeed be here, ushered in by an army of perfect teachers. Our present work is to find out what this "right thing" is in song, in story, in play and in working methods, that we may give it to our children and keep them "with us" for periods of longer and longer duration.

If you have ever taught little children you know what I mean when I say that often we have only the body of the child with us; you know what I mean when I say we hold the

child's mind or attention as well; you also know that even then, unless we have the soul, the will, the love of the child in addition, our work is but imperfectly done.

You must at some time in your dealings with children, either in school or out of it, have experienced what I mean by the words, "having the whole child with you." If you have not, then play with some children, heartily and earnestly, and you will know that when you so hold them all things are possible.

Picture to yourself an ordinary group of six-year-old children gathered about a teacher, near a blackboard on which is a reading lesson. Some of the children are not even hearing or seeing. They are present in the body only. Others are looking and listening, and even repeating words over and over, which "go in at one ear and out at the other." Still other children, by virtue of good home training, a kindergarten education, an inherited pleasure in learning, or a sympathy with the teacher's thought, are "all there," and learning rapidly what she

intended the lesson to teach. But these last are the few, and in the beginning of the school year you are yearning with your whole soul for the many. You want them all, every one, with you for the forty weeks to come.

What can you do more than you have done? What new ways and means can you use? Is there any way, yet untried, to gather them to yourself?

You must become acquainted with your little folks, and that means more than knowing them by name and whether they are bright or slow. You must know what has already gone into their minds, as that is the mental foundation of the superstructure the school board expects you to raise. But more than this, you must in some way get at the soul of the child, if in the days to come that soul is to will, to think, and to do as you would have it.

What should you do first of all, to give yourself to the children and to get them to give themselves freely into your hands? Play with them. I do not mean by that that you

are to learn some pretty little kindergarten games and teach them to the children; I do not mean that you are to play for them, play at them, or make them play. I mean you are to play with them.

You have learned, perhaps, that "Play is the first creative utterance of man;" that "Play is the expression of self-activity." You know that the child comes to you from a world of play in which he has lived for six years; that its atmosphere is his native air. Now the whole child plays. Body, mind, and soul are all present when he is playing happily. Why can we not use this tremendous fact and, instead of taking the child out of this play world all at once and plunging him into a school work atmosphere, go down into it ourselves to meet him on his own ground, live and play with him there and, after nature's own method, make him so at one with us that we can lead him where we will?

Let me say again, and more simply, that you can in no way better learn to know your children than by playing with them. The

time will not be lost if you win them for friends and comrades; for once truly won, you can not only teach them what the school board decrees they must know by June and that more easily, but you can teach them much of this by means of the play they love.

You have of course heard much in kindergarten circles about organic unity, continuity, and relationships. In school circles you have heard the same thing discussed as unification or concentration of studies. You have made out a program in which you have strung your beads of reading, writing, language and number on a thread of science or literature. You are sufficiently advanced in new lines of thought to know something of the scientific and psychological reasons for relating your work. Add another bead to the string, and call it play.

Remember, the child will learn what he loves; remember that he will love what gives or has given him pleasure; and let him express in dramatic action the things you are anxious he should love. Every expression deepens the corresponding impression. Ex-

pression in games and plays being most natural and spontaneous necessarily makes deep impressions.

And now you ask, "What shall we play?" From the large and increasing store of kindergarten games and songs select such as carry out or emphasize your own thought, and which are at the same time adapted to your peculiar circumstances and surroundings. Change, adapt, and transpose to meet your individual necessities. You have another and a richer source of supply in the inventive imagination of your children. If you can call that into full play you will never be at a loss for a representative game, or indeed a game of any kind. Believe me, this mine of wealth is at your feet; but you must find the way to it.

Remember, too, that making, unmaking, building, preparing, clearing away, seeking, and even working, are play to children if so presented. If you can so arrange your school life that the children can work with you for the attainment of desired ends, that will be play to them.

The tremendous force of the child's activity, often pent up to the exploding point, expends itself safely and happily in this kind of play. If the force be directed instead of dissipated, it will move the educational wheels as steam does those of the locomotive.

During September and October outdoor life is too beautiful to be left out of calculation, as it usually is when school has opened. Facilities for its adaptation to school purposes differ greatly in different localities and under different school governments. But if you have any facilities at all, if you can get out any time or anywhere with your children, let me beg of you so to use part of the many beautiful days of autumn.

The open country, the parks, and even the streets, are full of material and experiences we can use during the winter months, and any opportunity of observing, collecting, and enjoying Nature's gifts is the best of play to the children. I well know the obstacles in the way of this method of study, but until

you are absolutely sure that you cannot get out of doors with your flock, or part of it, do not give it up. You will come nearer to the soul of the child out of doors than in any other place.

A word as to the difficulties in the way of playing with children in the ordinary school-room: You have no circle such as they have in the kindergarten; you have but little unused space of any sort; many of the games in the books are impracticable for a large number of children.

The obstacles are very many and very real, and to overcome them you will have to call out all your powers of adaptability. There is always something that can be done. "Where there is a will there is a way." We can nearly always do what we really desire to do. If you have a thought in your mind which you wish to express in play, and are at a loss as to how it shall be carried out, consult the children themselves, and be sure that they will point out a way. Talk matters over freely with them, and do not be afraid to follow out their ideas.

Part of Froebel's idea of play prevails to a certain extent in the schoolrooms of to-day, and many teachers are seeking to enlist the interest and sympathy of the children by pervading their work with a play spirit. When quiet is necessary they play they are flowers, perhaps; in learning a word they sometimes take its picture; in writing, the hand is a sled, gliding over the snow, and so on.

This may do for awhile; but a child's imagination is so vivid that your own will have to become correspondingly so if you are to keep up with him. A thing must be really worth while, to hold a child's interest for any length of time. Play that is merely a device does not serve its purpose very long. To accomplish anything it must have a hold on the child's love; and by love, here as elsewhere, I am saying interest in a larger way. The moment your play with the children becomes desultory, stereotyped, and of the makeshift sort, that moment it begins to lose its hold on the child's affections; for children are very genuine.



Respect the intellects and intelligence of these six-year-olds with their lively imaginations, and give your own best thought to the plays and games you mean to use. Nothing less will accomplish your end, and your best help and inspiration will always come from the little folks themselves.

I have seen in good schools a wise use of various sorts of guessing games—as hide the thimble, stage-coach, dumb Crambo, and adaptations of other old standbys. They were used merely to rest the children or to brighten and quicken their intelligence—good motives both; but if these things can be accomplished by means of games that express and help to carry out the thought line on which you are working, you of course accomplish just so much more by them.

We must keep in mind the natural dramatic instinct of the children, and remember that they love to be frogs, birds, butterflies, horses, and bears, simply as such, in a game or out of one. Bearing this in mind, calling freely on the child's inventive

powers, and making a wise use of existing stores of material, we ought to be able in the world of play to meet the child on his own ground, and to call out his whole self to meet us and go with us on a ten months' journey which shall be a joy to both of us.

One more word to those who are saying to themselves, "This is all nonsense! School is a place for work, not play. I never played in school, and this 'new education' seems to be a collection of ways and means to make everything easy to the children—a sort of royal road to learning, where the teacher alone really works."

Six years is a very short span of life. The little folks who enter school this month have been mothers' babies all their lives. They have done nothing but play so far, and it is hardly reasonable or fair not to introduce them into a work-world gradually and naturally instead of plunging them at once into a cold bath of restriction. Aside from this, until you have the love and good will of the child you cannot get his best work. We can gain this good will by meeting Six-year-

old at least half way, and by following Nature, who is ever teaching us that her ways are best.

No reasonable teacher doubts for a moment that the school is a workshop; that habits of industry and application must be formed there; but she proposes to form these habits in the children under her care by educating the will, the love, the affection, the motive power of the child. She learned when at school herself that "You may lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink." She knows how much time teachers past and present have spent in trying to make their horses drink, and she hopes by newer and more scientific methods to excite a thirst in hers that shall make them want to drink of the waters flowing from the fountains of knowledge and wisdom.



Chapter 11.

GIFTS, OCCUPATIONS AND MATERIALS.

HAT kindergarten material can be and ought to be used in our primary schools is now an accepted fact. Teachers believe in it, and would be glad to avail themselves of it; but, with the best intentions in the world, find themselves at a loss as to how to use it. They not only lack special kindergarten training, but during school hours they also lack the time to use such material in any way except for busy work.

There is much of the higher gift-work that kindergarten children seldom get, for the reason that they are removed at the earliest possible moment to the schoolroom. Could they find this work there, it would be of great advantage to them; but in writing for the average school teacher, her lack of

technical training in the use of these gifts must be constantly kept in mind. The Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Gifts are building blocks, cubes divided into smaller cubes, oblong and triangular blocks, which are capable of an infinite variety of transformations, and can be made to express a child's thought in many ways. They gratify the innate love of building, afford scope for creative activity, and present concrete number to the learner in a manner that enlists his attention and goodwill. To get the greatest good from these Gifts in school it is necessary that the teacher be with her children. Blocks are too noisy for busy work, and a child left alone with them soon meets his limitations, unless he has had good kindergarten training. To the primary teacher their best value is usually found in their use for number lessons and as aids to the related number work, of which she hears so much in these latter days.

You know, O teacher, that the love and interest of the child must be with you if you are to be a real teacher to him; you know

that he loves to build, to make, and to do; you know that your work must be related work and your thought connected thought. You are required to teach your pupil the combinations in ten or twenty, and you wish this work to be related to the underlying thought of the day, whatever it may be. Froebel has put his gifts into your hands as a means to this very end. To use these means wisely and well you must study them carefully yourself and find out what can be done with them.

Take the building blocks at your command, and with a thought in your mind, seek to give it expression by means of any one or more of the gifts. Find out for yourself how much of number and of form is in the structure you have reared, and then study how to present it to the children. Let them learn it unconsciously if possible, taught by their interest in what they are doing, or lead them to see it directly if necessary. The former method will require more skill and be more efficacious; if you use the latter you will doubtless have to

tell Johnny to "pay attention" more than once.

In the kindergarten the children use the building blocks in various ways. They build in sequence and by dictation, they invent on given lines; they build freely in working out a thought, story, or experience; they even play with the blocks unrestricted at times; but in school the number of children, their distance from the teacher, and the unavoidable noise make it hard for the teacher to allow much liberty in this direction. With a class gathered about a table, or even in their seats, a dictation lesson is easily managed, the thought happily expressed, and an opportunity for invention given by many a teacher who believes that Froebel's means are adapted to primary school ends.

The thought which a teacher wishes to express, the number and form involved, must be clear in her own mind if good results are to be obtained from the children. What she sees in the blocks she can lead them to see, and they will lead her to see

with their eyes, too, if she is willing to be led into the child-mind.

Published works on kindergarten material will be of help to her suggestively, but I have faith to believe that a clear thought in her own mind, and a conscientious desire to express that thought in building blocks, will be productive of suggestions more perfectly adapted to her peculiar circumstances than any form she could possibly copy from any book whatever. Should she avail herself of any and every opportunity for instruction that offers, draw upon her own originality, and get help from the children themselves on occasion, she would find Froebel's building gifts one of her best aids in teaching number.

These building gifts, as I have said, are the Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth. The First and Second belong to the home and the kindergarten, and will be frequently reviewed in the drawing lessons.

The Seventh Gift is the tablet, square and triangular. In these the thoughtful teacher can find infinite lessons in number and form. With them surfaces are represented, and

geometrical forms in great variety produced. While expressing thought, they can be used, not only for number work, but for drawing lessons and busy work.

The child can so easily represent a simple surface that whatever he makes with tablets can be easily reproduced on slate, paper, or blackboard. It would be well in this connection, perhaps, for the teacher to get an idea of the possibilities of the Seventh Gift by studying some such book as "The Kindergarten Guide," by Maria Kraus-Boelte. With its suggestions and her own resources she can invent many lessons and problems for her children which they can work out by themselves.

The Eighth Gift is the connected slat. Its use would depend entirely on the individual teacher. If after carefully examining it she could find through it the expression of any thought which she wished should find a lodgment in her children's minds, it would be well to provide herself with it. She will seldom find it in any store of material in either school or kindergarten.

The Ninth Gift, the disconnected slat, is capable of much in the way of representing outlines; but the Tenth Gift, or small sticks of different lengths, is perhaps better adapted for this purpose in the schoolroom. Number lessons in plenty are to be found in the outline reproduction of a story or an experience. On certain lines children can work alone with the sticks at their desks with every degree of freedom. For number work, for seat work, for reproduction and expression, the sticks are invaluable in a primary room, especially in the beginning months.

The Eleventh Gift, the steel rings in wholes, halves and quarters, is more expensive and less adapted to school use. Ideas of curved surfaces, however, can be worked out with them better than with anything else.

The Twelfth Gift, seeds or lentils, used to illustrate the point, are familiar objects in every schoolroom. In fact, they are used so much that in many schools they have become meaningless. Because they are well

adapted to the seat-work period, they are used for copying until the child is too tired of them to do anything worth doing with them. Unless a vitalizing thought to which he can give expression with the lentils, lies in the child's mind, they amount to but little; but with the right motive power the seeds can be of great service.

And now as to the occupations. It will not be necessary in this connection to make any argument for manual training. We all believe that hand-work of some kind should be a part of every school day, and primary teachers are looking hopefully toward the kindergarten occupations. Each one of these is capable of so much expansion and amplification that any teacher at all familiar with them could give her children lessons in sloyd, manual training, hand-work, or whatever she chose to call it, with most excellent results, had she time to work with them individually; but the larger part of the day she has a group or class about her to whom she is giving special instruction, while the other two-thirds are in their seats, supposedly at



work. What she demands from kindergarten material is its adaptation to the necessary periods of seat work; and, be it understood, such seat work as is purposeful and developing.

With a little direction children of six years of age can be left to themselves, with pricking. For many reasons this class of work is better adapted to the school than to the kindergarten. The children are older and better able to do fine finger work, and the light, coming uniformly over the left shoulder, is better than in most kindergartens. A teacher can easily familiarize herself with the school of pricking and adapt it to her own peculiar uses. None of these occupations, in this day of "unification of studies," can be used rightly if unrelated and isolated.

The picture-sewing cards, sold by dealers or drawn by the teacher, are a source of hand-training and of much pleasure to the children. They can be easily selected, or invented along the thought line of the week or month by a teacher who is willing to as-

sume the responsibility of needles and thread.

The kindergarten-school sewing—lines, angles, curves, and their combinations—could not well be given in a primary room without an assistant, as, owing to absences, anything like class work is impossible, and much individual direction necessary. The same objection applies to weaving, unless the children have come from a kindergarten. Given as special lessons by the teacher herself, both of these occupations have much development in them; but I am trying to discuss the subject from the “seat work” point of view.

Children will always work quietly and happily with clay, the possibilities of which are too well known in the schoolroom to need further mention, as is the case with drawing, painting and color work.

With peas and sticks many a thought may be made objective by little fingers, and paper and scissors never fail to give delight. Paste and paper can do wonders of expression with very little direction.



All these materials are most plastic in the hands of a teacher who has thoughts to express by means of them, and who realizes how necessary it is that her children should constantly express the impressions made, by making and building as well as by writing and speaking.

Folding lessons are valuable for teaching number and form, and after enough direct lessons from the teacher the child develops a power of invention which makes a four-inch folding paper sufficient for many minutes of concentrated attention and skillful hand-work.

A course of instruction in the use of the gifts and occupations would reveal to the teacher many of their possibilities, and her own imagination would suggest endless new ones. Realizing that there is no inherent virtue or mystic power in these simple materials, and using them always to help the child to expression, self-revelation, and self-knowledge, she can make them a power in her school-room if she will. She should, if possible, supply herself with building blocks, beads,

tablets, sticks, rings, seeds, pricking and sewing cards, peas, paste, paper, and scissors, as well as sand, clay, crayon, and paints; or as many of these materials as she can get, and will have intelligent use for. Let the necessity call for the material, rather than the material create a necessity for work that may be pretty, but of no educative value.



Chapter 111.

SCIENCE WORK.



GVEN the least progressive of our schools now have something which is called science work, and which is given a regular place in the course of study. To many teachers it means a little collecting of leaves, acorns, stones, and caterpillars by the children, and reading lessons about them. This is a little better than cats and bats, perhaps, and a step in the right direction; but the conscientious, progressive teacher whom I am addressing is not satisfied with this. She wishes to know what science work in the schoolroom really is and how to go about it.

She must know, first of all, that science is another name for God's truth, and that a knowledge of this truth is an end, not a mere means of teaching reading and writing. Reading and writing, to be sure, are taught

by means of this search for truth, but only because the knowledge is worth acquiring in itself and because children are near enough to God, to nature, to truth, to be interested in the search. The subject, the object, the thing studied, must be worth studying, and one must really study it, really know something about it.

In his "Talks on Pedagogics," the author has said this so well and so emphatically that everyone may understand and know it. It will do no harm to say again, and as forcibly as possible, that all a child's school time should be spent in the pursuit of a knowledge of truth that is worth the knowing for time and for eternity. Surely the study of God revealed in nature is one worthy of our time, strength, and power!

Realizing that you and your children are in a beautiful world, which is a revelation of its Creator, and that you have only one school year in which to study it together, you will go to work to acquaint yourself with the objects, the life, the truth which you wish to present. You will study the subject-



matter of your science work until you have something you desire to teach. You will become so interested in it yourself that it will be a pleasure to impart what you know; and having enjoyed making discoveries yourself, you will be wise enough to let your pupils travel over the same delightful road and discover for themselves. You will lead where they will gladly follow. For your reading lessons you will have something to say about the leaves, acorns, and milkweed pods, which is worth writing on the black-board. Such sentences as "The apple is red, It is round, It has a stem," will not satisfy you very long, as you remember that the children already know so much, and that there are other things concerning even a little red apple worth knowing, worth reading and worth remembering.

A lack of knowledge of the subject-matter for nature study is the mountain of difficulty in most primary rooms. This mountain must be scaled if you are to teach reading with science for a basis. An interest in the subject studied, and a sympathy with the

child's natural interest in it, will come with this mastering of subject-matter, and both the interest and the sympathy are emphatically necessary if you are to be a true teacher of natural science and not a dabbler. So, whatever you do or have left undone, O busy teacher, go to work to master your subject, whatever it may be, that you may have the interest that will breed interest in the child, and the sympathy that will draw his whole self to you as you walk the path of study together.

You ask how you are to gain a knowledge of the necessary subject-matter, and where you are to find help. I answer that you are to open your own eyes to the world of truth and beauty about you first, learn from the children themselves next, and seek the help to be found on every hand in books, magazines, papers, museums, classes and schools. I know of no one book, however, more helpful to the "common school teacher," to whom it is dedicated, than "Nature Study." The author has told you what to study and how to get



about it, for he believes that you must get your knowledge largely at first hand, from nature herself. For this reason, instead of telling you outright what you want to know, he simply sets you to work. Every teacher will see the wisdom of this course; for we know that what we acquire at first hand belongs to us as does no other kind of knowledge. Leaving literature out of account for the present, the basis for reading, writing, number and language lessons, then, is a knowledge of the subject-matter on your own part, gained partly at least at first hand, and experiences on the part of the children which will lead them to discover for themselves what you wish them to learn.

Teachers are apt to undervalue the use of experiences as subjects for lessons. For holding the interest and attention of a child they are unequalled. I refer to experiences other than those necessary for regular science work. To illustrate: Suppose a teacher with some knowledge of birds and a genuine interest in their fall migration should take a few of her children out for an after-



school walk. They may see several birds, note what they are doing, learn the names of one or two not previously known, and on the way home find and possess themselves, child-fashion, of such things as mountain-ash berries, acorns, burrs, cones and pebbles. The teacher with genuine interest and sympathy examines these treasures, and in a few words, when the child-heart is warm and open, explains something of their nature and purpose. On the next day the story of that walk is made into a reading lesson; the discoveries and teaching in it are now emphasized. Would not such a lesson be of absorbing interest to the children and worth the reading?

Teachers may think they have no time for such outdoor work, and yet a little of it would save much of the hard labor expended on the average reading lesson. Any experience, whether outdoors or indoors, with the teacher, at home, or with play-mates, is an interesting subject to the child. With the rest of us, he likes to see himself and the people he knows in print or script.



Therefore, I would add to my science and literature bases for reading lessons actual experiences.

Outdoor experiences, teachers and pupils in company, are essential if science work is to be done. The teacher too often relies on a child's experience of nature before he enters school, what he gains as he goes along from day to day, and on the material brought in. All these are good and necessary, but they cannot take the place of outdoor work with the teacher. You know how blindly a grown person can go through the world of nature, and if you remember your own childhood you know how blindly you lived in it as a child. You will also remember how a word, an exclamation, an expression of interest from someone you admired, opened your eyes and awakened your interest. Once out of doors with your children, your own sincere interest in the things about you will awaken theirs as nothing else can. Aside from this, the freedom from restraint, the liberty to express themselves with as much noise as they



wish, wakes up the whole child. His mind is at its best, because his soul as well as his body is with you.

No way has yet been invented which will admit of a teacher's taking a small number of her pupils out with her during school hours; for there is no one to take charge of the others. Taking thirty or forty out at a time has been tried, and while something can be accomplished, it is not altogether satisfactory. No one, however well disposed, can get very near to forty six-year-olds at one time; for the teacher needs to get at the very hearts of her little people if she wishes to go hand in hand with them into the world they love. Unless some one can be found to teach at least two-thirds of the school while the teacher goes out with the other third, it will hardly be possible to make excursions except after school hours. It is, however, not only possible, but very practicable, for a teacher to give a half hour, or even an hour, during the good weather, to a walk with a part of her pupils. This sounds like hard doctrine;



but virtue will be its own reward, in rich results. The teacher will know her children better, enjoy them more, gather with them a rich store of experience, and make discoveries in nature's own way. As a result she will have a basis for school work which will make the hours spent indoors much happier and more profitable. She will have gained for herself added strength rather than added fatigue.

Remember that after October has gone the good days grow fewer, and that in the spring they are few and far between, even into June. Use the golden days of opportunity when they come, to bring in stores for the winter, as well as for direct science work and observation. Let the children themselves, with your presence for inspiration, gather the acorns, nuts, twigs, soils, grains, seeds, pine branches, and stones which you are going to study later on. Let them, if your school is in or near the country, share their wealth of material with children in city schools, because it will be easy for you to establish communication with some



school in a district less favored than your own.

In city schools, of course, the opportunity for outdoor work is limited, even if the teacher have a disposition to make excursions with her little ones. But even in the city there are sparrows and pigeons about the streets, and wild birds in the parks; weeds blossom, go to seed, and have many curious habits; seeds are plenty, and fruit is always obtainable. Vegetables, grains, trees, soils, and animals are numerous; window gardens are possible, and experiences are to be found everywhere. Visits to factories, shops, and yards can be made; city life teems with subjects for thought and study. We are indebted to the earth for stone pavements, concrete walks, cedar blocks, all building material—and in fact, everything, so that even among brick walls and telegraph poles we are not so far from Mother Nature as some city school teachers think. If you find it quite impossible to go out with the children, and depend on objects brought in, do not be afraid of “wasting valuable time” in

studying these objects, before attempting to read about them. Remember that the child's mental pictures must be clear ones before written words can recall definite images. Remember that children yearn to handle everything which interests them, and that the sense of feeling is an important aid to the gaining of clear concepts. Remember that studying an object means not only looking at it with the attention that interest compels, but handling it, drawing it, painting it, making it, and playing it, as well as reading and writing about it.

Scientific kindergartening is largely an appreciation of opportunity and taking advantage of the same. The word in season, spoken when the child's heart is open, is the word that is long remembered. The teaching of reading can be made more a matter of opportunity than you think. When the child is all alive with interest, then is the time impressions are made by objects, be those objects written or printed words or more concrete things. If a teacher watches for and seizes these opportunities, she can



often teach in five minutes more effectively than in fifteen of regular class work. For instance, Johnny brings to his teacher before school something which is an object of interest to him, and therefore to her. She shows it to the children after school begins, and because they are as interested in it as Johnny, she quickly writes its name, or a few sentences about it, on the board. Other children tell of similar treasures and perhaps furnish additional sentences. Or, in the morning talk, something is said about frost, snow, storm, or wind, which arouses a keen interest and desire to talk. From this subject-matter, while interest is at white heat, the skillful teacher makes a short reading lesson that produces a deep impression. Something happens in the school-room: a bird flies in through the window, a moth comes out of a cocoon, a spider drops slowly down from the ceiling on his gossamer thread—all of which awaken the child's interest; and he is the wise teacher who uses this tremendous power to move the educational wheels, instead of letting it go to waste.

Chapter IV.

FESTIVALS AND HOLIDAYS.



ONE has only to go back into his own childhood and live for a while in the joyous anticipation and happy celebration of various red-letter days, to understand why Froebel made festal occasions so prominent a part of his system of education. It is well for the busy teacher, who has a certain task to accomplish within a certain time, who dreads the interruption in routine and the general commotion which gala-days occasion—it is well for her to realize what these days and hours mean to the children; it is well for her to appreciate the force of the interest, enthusiasm, and good-will so generated, and then to turn it to account. Children delight in occasions, and care more for the accompanying variety and novelty than for the manner of celebration. A little will

go a great way with them, and, as in all relations between teacher and pupil, sympathy and participation on the child's own ground is the main thing. Teachers too often regard the days set apart by custom and tradition as interruptions to the regular work, which must be borne and lived through with as little trouble and as speedily as possible. They look upon time spent in the preparation and the celebration of such days as lost or wasted. They are glad when such celebrations are over and they can settle down to "regular work" again.

In most schools birthdays are passed without notice. Hallowe'en and April Fools' day are celebrated possibly by a few words of warning as to the behavior of the pupils out of school; Valentine's day is tolerated to the extent of a valentine box; Thanksgiving day receives honorable mention, but Christmas is supposed to be best observed by a holiday from school work. Washington's birthday, Lincoln's birthday, and Memorial day receive more attention, because so ordered by school authorities,

and because it is the proper thing from a patriotic point of view; but there is a sameness and a monotony about the songs, decorations, speeches, and the reciting of "The Blue and the Gray" from year to year, that, whatever the day may be to children, though it is possible that they, too, may tire of it by the time they reach the eighth grade, makes the teacher glad when the day is over. Hal-lowe'en does not amount to much in the opinion of grown folks, but the children cling fondly to old customs. They are bound to celebrate it in some manner. The small boys will join groups of older boys in the evening in the ecstatic thought of taking off gates, throwing cabbages, and upsetting horse-blocks. The small girls will stay at home wishing they could join their brothers.

Our ideal teacher, who has resolved to be Froebellian in all her work this year, is more than willing to meet the children on their own ground. She is glad to give them the sympathy they crave, and to enter heartily into their mirth, even if it does cost time and trouble. She is consecrated to her work in

school as well as out. So, when the last day of October comes, she brings with her to school a program arranged for the hilarious occasion. She is prepared to give in a reading or writing lesson a simple account of the origin of the hallowed eve; she tells a Hallowe'en story and uses its suggestiveness for her real work; she will talk with her children and let them tell her all they know about it, and have further reading lessons on their experiences; she may even give her science lesson on a pumpkin that will change into a Jack-o'-lantern before she is through with it. Best of all, she will explain to her little folks that there are two kinds of jokes to play on people — jokes that are only unkind and mischievous, and jokes that are pleasant surprises; and then she and they together will plan a few harmless, happy ones for the evening. She will meet them, with the mothers' permission, at one of the homes. As soon as it is dark, all together like the Brownies, they will go out and play a joke on some friendly neighbor. They will rake all the leaves from old Mr. John-

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son's grass and surprise him, Mr. Johnson having been previously and privately warned to keep quiet and out of sight; or each one will bring some vegetable and leave it on some needy person's doorstep. Perhaps they will have an opportunity to repair mischief done by older boys, and perhaps sing some of their pretty autumn songs under the window of some sick child or friend.

There are many jokes of this kind to be played, and the children, bless their warm little hearts, are equally as glad to play this kind as the other; more glad, indeed, if some older friend will go with them in a spirit of frolic. Such expeditions impossible? Not so impossible as they seem! Given an unselfish, consecrated teacher, and the thing is done; for the children are always ready and eager to participate. Mothers and friends gladly cooperate with teachers when asked to do so, and the older brothers and sisters are always eager to join in. October evenings are long, darkness comes early, and a whole party can begin and end between six and eight o'clock. What a wealth of material

can be gathered for the next day's work in the experiences that mean so much to the children, to say nothing of the good-will, kindness and comradeship engendered by the fun all have had together!

April Fools' day can be celebrated in much the same way, and will be more easily managed, as it is a day, instead of an "e'en." By planning in advance, enough kindly jokes and happy surprises may be arranged to fill a school day with delight, and to send the children home with a new April-fool method to try on those about them. For instance, take the time-honored custom, in which we have all doubtless indulged, of pinning paper streamers labeled "April Fool" on our friends in their unguarded moments. Why not keep some of the children's work—pretty sewing cards, written stories, pictures carefully drawn, paintings, and other hand-work, for this day, to pin upon friends, instead of waste paper? Suppose such things were to be left on door-steps and in unsuspected places for those the children love. Take the April-fool jokes

your children confide to you and turn them right side out. Every unkind or meaningless joke will suggest its opposite, and this wealth of material and experience will make the school lessons of that week among the most impressive ones of the year.

And Valentine's day! Going back to the childhood of the small girl whom "I knew best of all," I remember how much pleasure lay in anticipation of and preparation for the day. Fully four weeks before the Fourteenth of February we children set up a valentine box in the hall—a sealed box with a narrow opening in the top. From that time on we were happily busy with pencils and paints making valentines for each other, which we dropped into the box for the eventful day. Something of the same sort could be done in school, and acceptable work easily transformed into valentines for friends and play-mates, to lie side by side with those especially made for the occasion and those bought at the store. The school valentine day would, like the other festal days, bring with it the story of the day; valentines could be



made as beautiful as the materials allow, and the box opened as a climax. Comic valentines need not even be considered, for every teacher discourages them in words, and our ideal teacher spends weeks discouraging them in deeds. The pretty, old-fashioned custom of leaving the valentine on the doorstep, ringing the bell and running away, has been largely discarded in favor of the postman; so when I recall the joy it was to us to receive valentines in this mysterious way, and the bliss it was to send them, I am willing to urge my ideal teacher not only to revive the old custom by indorsement of it, but to take a turn at it herself with the children after school.

Kindergartners have been making valentines for years, and each one of them knows many pretty ways by which to transform paper and pictures into love tokens. The teacher's originality and that of the children will be called into full play; for of course the small folks have been doing this kind of work at home under the teacher's stimulus, and bringing it to school.

Thanksgiving day brings its own suggestions. In addition to the first lessons in American history which it offers the little ones, it holds experiences past and prospective which make delightful reading lessons. It is essentially a family day, and our conscientious teacher can safely leave her flock for her own family this time. A thoughtful music teacher has instituted a pretty practice among the children in some of the public schools of one of our large cities by inducing them to sing their Thanksgiving song early Thanksgiving morning just outside father's and mother's door. The same encouragement and suggestion is given at Christmas and Easter time with most happy results.

There is no reason why in primary schools, as in the kindergarten, the children should not prepare at least a few gifts for their home people. Any mother is glad to have neat little books of school work, and all a child's love and good-will, surrounded by the beautiful Christmas mystery, can thus be put into their work for weeks.

If the children are reading and writing about Christmas, working with their hands for Christmas, reciting Christmas poems, and singing Christmas carols during the days preceding that usually riotous and mixed-up "last afternoon," there is not much call for special exercises. In perfect accord with the other work, can the songs be sung, the poems recited for the last time, the work finished and distributed, the last story told, and anticipation and good wishes written and read for the parents and friends who choose to come, and the last hours be made happy, busy and profitable.

In regard to Washington's birthday, Lincoln's birthday, and Memorial day, I would suggest for the little ones that instead of a little decoration with flags, some patriotic songs, and "pieces" spoken by individual children, the rooms be made bright not only with flags, but with blackboard pictures of the stories told, drawn by the children, and by any other kind of work that can be exhibited; that the lessons be read, the songs sung, the poems recited, which have

been a part of the regular work for the preceding days or weeks, that the marches and physical exercises which are a part of each day's program be well and carefully practiced, because fathers, mothers, and friends are coming. It is more satisfactory on these festal days for parents and friends to see something in the line of regular school work, with the occasion for subject-matter, than the usual celebration in primary rooms. It will be more strictly educational for the children, and the teacher who is anxious to keep them up to grade will not feel that precious time has been lost.

Birthdays of individual children will supply bits of biographical reading most interesting to the hero of the story, and to his comrades as well; they will not only give a pleasant variety, but an opportunity for gathering impressions, deep in proportion to the new interest. The kindergarten custom of making the birthday child the leader and favored one for the day could be easily adopted in primary rooms, and would mean much—so much—to the little Johnny or

Mary to whom a birthday is a great event. In the kindergarten some of the day's hand-work is made into a gift for the birthday child, and the same thing could be done in school if the teacher wished it.

One word as to patriotism, for the patriotic festal days are those most emphasized in school life. A knowledge of our own country is of course necessary; patriotic songs will never be forgotten and will move the heart, as only music can, throughout a lifetime. The flag should be a loved and familiar object, and marching and drilling have their place and part in the instillation of patriotism into the youthful mind. In time of war or emergency all these things through their very familiarity would go toward inspiring a patriotism which would lead to deeds of heroism and sacrifice. But there is another kind of patriotism too often lost sight of in the grand hurrah of a celebration. Our children are more likely to have to live for their country than to die for it. They must be good individual citizens if the commonwealth is to be preserved in all

its glory, and the children are as much a part of this great commonwealth now and to-day as they will be when they join the National Guard, go to West Point, or vote for University trustees. They can be good citizens in school, on the playground, and on the street. This patriotism is fostered when the children are not only taught respect for schoolroom property, the State's property, and therefore partly theirs, but also when they help to make the rooms beautiful and bright. It is also fostered when they are taught to respect the fenceless boundary lines of individual property owners, fruit trees, flowers, and park ways; to refrain from marking fences and sidewalks with chalk; from stoning birds and animals, and from being too noisy as they go to and from school in groups.

Public schools are too often public nuisances. In residence districts property is never as valuable near a school as a block or two away from it. - The school yards are often unsightly, the children noisy, and the building shabby. Would it not be a genuine

and a worthy patriotism if school grounds were made and kept beautiful by pupils and teachers, and if the school as a whole showed habitual consideration for its neighbors? The work that children can and will do under friendly inspiration is underestimated. They would like nothing better than to dig, plant, rake and water, if the always necessary sympathy and participation of the teacher could be with them. Sympathy and participation! The words will bear repeating, for they are the "open sesame" to the child's heart.



Chapter V.

COLOR, FORM AND NUMBER.

HOW can we introduce the element of beauty into our schoolrooms now and to-day? We seem to be always going to do something toward it, but we do not really accomplish much; we have so much else to do; the conditions are bad; outside interests are pressing; and yet we want our schoolrooms improved, and mean to do so some day. We believe that children should be surrounded by the beauties of form and color. We believe heartily in art influences in the schoolroom; we have heard lectures and read articles on the subject, to all of which we intellectually subscribed, and yet many, so many, of our schoolrooms remain, to use a mild term, unbeautiful.

There are rooms whose sole adornment is a clock, and I am not sure that such an un-

pretentious place is not pleasanter to the artistic eye and sense than the one burdened with attempts at so-called decoration. You have seen the room with a few unkempt and uncared-for flowers on the window sills, some two or three chromos discarded from home walls, some unframed prints, or a quantity of kindergarten chains for ornamentation. Some of these attempts on the part of teachers are as touching as the little window boxes in the homes of the very poor, such homes as are seen bordering our cheerless railroad tracks, although the latter are much nearer true artistic decoration.

It seems a trite and needless thing to say that the first requisite in a schoolroom which is to be pleasant to the eye, is cleanliness. It is a fact, however, that our schoolrooms are not clean. Did you ever smell a clean one? Schoolhouses ought to be scrubbed down daily as well as ships, light-houses and life-saving stations. However, that time is not yet. Real cleanliness is not always attainable where the Lord High Janitor holds undisputed sway.

If we cannot be clean, let us be as clean as we can. As "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," so eternal painstaking on the part of the teacher is the price of bright, pleasant, clean surroundings. A dust-pan and brush can hang on a convenient nail, and five minutes' exercise with them at intervals during muddy days will brighten the face of those days. I know one teacher who gets her floor scrubbed frequently in exchange for cast-off clothing given to needy girls.

Granted, then, that a room can be clean, the thing of next importance is the light. Shades at every angle and glaring light make one kind of schoolroom; shades carefully adjusted to regulate the light make another kind of schoolroom.

If we have flowers in the windows at all, let us have good ones. They will not grow without care, and they seem to know when they are neglected. The children can and will bring good soil, water is plenty, and the time necessary for washing foliage, loosening the soil and removing dead leaves

is not long; and these things, too, can be done by the children.

Imagining cleanliness, pleasant light and flourishing window boxes, what about those bare, blank walls? Happily they are tinted now in most schools, and should a teacher choose to hang good pictures she could easily have a room in which she and the children would take pride and delight. Both teachers and pupils pass so many hours inside these walls that it is worth while to make the place something like home.

Good housekeeping, one should think, is attainable by all, but with some people it seems to be inborn and with others impossible. I have noticed, and others bear me out in the observation, that school children, chameleon-like, in appearance partake of the nature of their surroundings. Any set of children in an untidy, dirty and disorderly room look correspondingly untidy, dirty and disorderly. Contrariwise, children in a clean, well-kept and orderly room have an air of cleanliness, of care and order about



them. A brush and comb in the teacher's desk, wisely used, will add much to the school-scape, and often make a good child out of one who is inclined to begin the day rebelliously. All this is saying nothing of the reactionary effect, mental and moral, of a child's surroundings. I must not enter that field here but content myself with outward and visible tokens for the present.

As to the pictures, individual means, individual taste and individual consecration to the cause will determine their quantity and quality. It will hardly be disputed that if any pictures are put upon our walls they ought to be good ones. There are many bright, pretty, attractive and transient pictures easily procurable, but there are also copies of the permanent pictures to be had at small cost. The school year is so short a span in a child's life that we have no time to give him anything but the best. Perhaps I can illustrate my point practically by citing the experience of a teacher who visited all of the large general stores of Chicago, and found by long and careful search-

ing copies of several of the Madonnas, Breton's End of the Harvest, Joshua Reynold's Angels' Heads, Landseer's Deer, Landseer's Horses, The Good Shepherd, The Return of the Mayflower, The First Christmas Night, and a good portrait of Washington. These were framed, the largest frame costing but seventy-five cents and the pictures ranging in price from thirteen to fifty cents. When summed up, the cost of her treasures was several dollars, but the teacher has these pictures now for the rest of her life, and her schoolroom is a unique feature in the building of which it is a part.

Imagine with me once again our ideally clean room, our blooming window garden, our soft light and tinted walls, on which hang not too many good pictures; imagine the children's rough heads made smooth, neckties tied, and hands and faces washed, if need be; imagine the spirit of good housekeeping to have penetrated cupboards, drawers, and desks, and in this pleasant place consider with me for a moment the subject of color as it comes to the children. You do not



forget that this room is not burdened with decorative odds and ends. There are no advertising cards, no paper chains, no cheap fans, and no faded flags, though there may be one or two good flags draped over Washington's portrait.

Nature's own brilliant colorings are in the window against a background of blue sky. Perhaps one or two of the pictures on the wall are deep, rich-toned Venetian scenes. The child has handled and learned the primary and secondary colors in the paper folding and pasting, and other hand-work, and you now desire to put the color itself into his hands.

The subject of painting in primary rooms suggests many a practical question. I have before me visions of mussy paint boxes, soiled rags, spilled water, shapeless daubs, and happy faces. Oh the bliss of splashing on heaps of crimson lake and prussian blue! Oh the joy of mixing orange, green and purple! Oh the mighty effort that goes into the attempt at self-expression when it comes to applying the color!



There is no toy so dear to a child as a box of paints; there is no material better for expressing thought; there is no hand training superior to the teaching of a skillful use of this plastic material. Never mind if the little folks do make "an awful muss" of everything within reach the first day they have the paints. Bring all your skill in teaching and your science of good house-keeping to bear on the subject. Have one lesson to consist largely of getting ready and putting away, with a minimum quantity of actual painting. Paint from the object the six balls of the First Gift, one at a time, with skillful handling of material for your main point. Teach carefulness; do not expect it and blame the painting if it is not forthcoming. Teach it as you would teach reading or writing, as a means to an end, and long before spring comes, with its wealth of bud and blossom, you will be able to give your pupil an object with the simple direction to paint it, and you will have seat work of the best educational value. Do not outline or set the pattern.



Let the children paint directly from the object, and do not be discouraged if for a long time "nobody makes anything that looks like anything."

The gifts you are using this year are so full of form lessons that any special word on that subject seems unnecessary. You know that the child's concepts of form must come through sense-avenues, that he must see, handle and use forms if he is to have a clear mental picture of them. In no other way will these concepts grow in his mind. He can have no better method of gaining this experience than the lessons you give him with blocks, sticks, rings, tablets, and seeds, when he seems to be only playing. A child who uses kindergarten material is constantly gaining concepts of form. He is working with points, lines, angles, surfaces, and solids every time he plays with, transforms, or recombines this material. The element of number is constantly presented to him in this way. He is handling numbers of things, playing with numbers, recombining with numbers, and transforming quantities.

In the teaching of number to little children, the element of opportunity is perhaps the greatest one. The child helps us out by his natural love of counting, measuring, and estimating. In nearly everything you do with and for him the element of number is largely present if you could only see it, though at one time it is more prominent to you than at other times. Often the child's mind seems to be closed to it; though more often it is open and you neglect to take advantage of it.

A new work on primary arithmetic might be summed up in the sentence: Watch for number opportunities and take advantage of them. Another volume might read: Make number opportunities from subject-matter which has an educational value.

If by means of actual experience and handling of quantities a child really knows number, the expression of this knowledge, we are told, is a comparatively simple matter. Many primary teachers, however, have not found it so. They have told me that, while the children are perfectly familiar

with the number ten in its combinations, in objects, and while handling material, they have great difficulty with the expression in figures. They do not seem to have made a right connection, and to have realized that $4 + 4 = 8$ stands for the visible fact which they know so well when handling blocks or acorns. Perhaps this, too, is a matter of opportunity. Perhaps if expression in figures were given at exactly the right moment it would be a simple matter. At any rate it is worth trying; that all-powerful "right moment" is worth seeking and worth working for.

The author of "Nature Study," in his book on number work in relation to nature study, has given great help to teachers in this matter, and has told us much about the making and using of opportunities. The author of "Talks on Pedagogics," too, has told us again and again, and finally once again, how to seek, find and make the educational opportunity that means everything in the teaching of number.

Chapter VI.

TRADES, INDUSTRIES, ART, ARTISANSHIP.



HERE a paper to be written on a kindergarten year instead of a school year, one could keep closely to the text which heads this page; for in the kindergarten a knowledge of, participation in, and sympathy with trade life forms a definite part of the plan of work. The industries of the kindergarten are closely allied to the industries of life; the beginnings of art and artizanship surround the child on every hand, and it is easy to enlarge on any or all of these points. In the first school year, however, whether we would or not, we are found to drift far away from trade life. Our industries are only intellectually connected with the life industries which fill hands and minds later

on. While art in its beginnings forms a part of the school atmosphere, artizanship is relegated to manual training schools and the later years of school life.

But underlying principles are always to be found when sought after, and the great work principle, the hub of the wheel of social progress, is, can be, and ought to be a part of our first school year. The world's work must be done, and only the workers truly live and serve their fellow-men; hence children must be taught to work, to love work, and to work because it is right. In thinking of the sin and misery of the world about us it is easy to trace much of it to idleness and thriftlessness, and still more of it may be traced to desultory, spasmodic, selfish work. Many people will work hard enough for anything they want, who fail miserably when duty calls them to a work which must be done simply and solely because it is right.

If the teacher, like the fairy godmother, could give her children one good gift by means of which they might fight and con-

quer in the battle of life, she might well choose a true industry which would become a life habit; an industry which through consequent skill would result in a love of work, an industry which would hold them steadfast in the line of duty regardless of inclination.

To give a child this bent and to form this habit is in the teacher's power, although her means for reaching this end, her tools for character-building, are not as efficient as those of the kindergarten. It only remains with those of us who are teachers to make the best possible use of the tools and means we have to-day, without waiting for the better ones which are being brought nearer to us every day as the world rolls on its way toward the perfect school.

Let us contemplate for a moment the ideal school child, the child who is never late nor absent, who is in his seat at nine o'clock with folded hands and uplifted eyes ready to be led up the hill of knowledge, yearning for good habits which may be formed by the way. He gives his whole attention to the

opening exercises, and a lesson in music provides a half-hour's training in self-control and concentration, revealing, perhaps, something of science and literature as well. He comes to his reading class, and with the same concentrated attention learns, not only to read, but masters the subject-matter of his reading lesson and gains an added power of attention. He returns to his seat to write, draw, paint, model, or "do numbers," and works every moment of the allotted time, doing the work the best he can, and so forming daily the habits of industry which he is to take with him into life. His day goes on, class work in reading, numbers, writing, science, literature, art, and music, alternating with seat work. In the class he gets all the teacher has to give; at his seat he works so hard to do his best that he is never idle. So he becomes a well-behaved, well-informed, industrious possessor of the three R's.

This ideal child lives in the minds of teachers and parents, and also in the fond imaginations of school boards and superintendents, and those who make up courses of

study. If the fifty little desks were really filled with his like, teaching would be a daily joy. But alas! it is not so, any more than that ideal teachers sit in the chair at the teacher's desk. Whether past generations, present home training, insufficient teaching, crowded rooms and hours, or poorly equipped schools are to blame we will not say; we only know that Johnny, our everyday, freckled-faced, little Johnny, falls far below this ideal. He comes late to school and is often absent; he doesn't always feel like singing our sweet little songs; he isn't always as enraptured with the latest thing in science or literature work as we think he is going to be and ought to be; he doesn't always "pay attention" in the reading class, even though the subject-matter be, to us, of an intensely interesting nature; he works five minutes at his seat work and is idle or troublesome the other fifteen, and he doesn't always do his little best at writing, numbers, or even painting. Indeed, when you come to sum up the moments of Johnny's school day when he is actually and truly

busy, so busy as to help form a habit, you find they are not very many; and if you weigh on the other end of the scales the many moments in his five hours when he is idle, listless, inattentive, doing desultory work or in mischief, you may well pause and wonder how far along the road to industrious citizenship he will have traveled with you by the end of June. You will have taught him to read his first reader, to write, and to know the combinations in tens, so that he can pass into the second grade, perhaps; but had you had Johnny alone, and given him all your attention, in how long or short a time, think you, could you have taught him these things; and if he is capable of learning them in the shorter time, what has become of the extra hours? Is it even possible that he has begun to form the very opposite habits to those school life is designed and supposed to foster? Is it possible that he has started on the thorny paths of inattention, idleness, and mischievousness, and that he has in so doing weakened, rather than strengthened, his unfolding powers?

Now we know perfectly well that if we were ideal teachers we should have ideal pupils, so quickly does the plastic material of unspoiled child-nature respond to the master touch. We know that if we presented the right subjects in the right way the children would be held to the attention, concentration, and industry which would form the hoped-for character by their interest in the work, and by its exact adaptation to their individual needs. We know this, and we know as well how far from the ideal teacher we are in our daily walk and conversation, the conversation being considerably ahead of the walk. The most we can say for ourselves is that many of us are doing our best and are glad to be taught how to do better. Let us take counsel together how we can do better in this matter of giving our children the habit and power of industry.

In primary rooms there is a crying need for an assistant who can help the children at their seats, while the teacher is concentrating her whole thought on the little group about her. During the first weeks and even months

of the first school year the children can do so little alone. Many of them have never been to a kindergarten, and many have never learned to use their fingers at all. They muss and fuss, and give up trying in discouragement over poor results if left entirely to themselves. What can the teacher compelled to teach her classes, do about it? Often she gives them such simple busy work that it has little educational value; she longs in vain for an assistant; she learns to accept poor work and to tolerate anything which approaches the desired end.

In city schools with cast-iron rules and programs, changes are hardly possible; but some teachers in more favored districts have been trying the plan of devoting the first few weeks to teaching the children not only to work but how to work, before leaving them at all to themselves. It amounts to holding, for a short time, a sort of advanced kindergarten for the promotion of the habit and power of industry. These children, if the plan is a success, can be safely left alone to work and thus accomplish something. The



greatest danger of forming bad school and life habits lies in this necessary seat work. To realize this you have only to contrast the energetic, concentrated industry which a Six-year-old, who has mastered the intricacies of needle-threading, gives to a sewing card with the work he puts on a bit of writing, number work, or even stick-laying.

This love of sewing ought to furnish us with a clew to the labyrinth of Johnny's mind. He loves to sew quite as well as little Mary does, and why is it? Is it not that he so soon gains sufficient skill to have a power over his material? We all love to do the thing we do well, the thing we *can* do, and contrariwise we dislike to do the thing we do poorly. Johnny also, with his bit of sewing, makes something which is somewhat tangible and permanent. Very different is a prancing horse or ponderous elephant, outlined stitch by stitch, from a slate full of writing or a paper with a poor drawing on it. Does not this show that if we wish him to work, with love and interest for the motive and habit making power, we must plan work

for him which he can do with some degree of skill, and let him, at least occasionally, have the opportunity of making something which is worth keeping or taking home? It would be necessary to take the time to give the child this degree of skill and power over his material which is to make him so much a master of the situation, when left to himself for a twenty-minute period, that he will really work. The question is left to the individual teacher, Would this beworth your while?

It is no use supposing that the children have learned to work in the kindergarten until there is a kindergarten in every public school, and a good kindergarten too, taught by a kindergartner who has some knowledge of the conditions which will surround her children in the primary room into which they are going, as well as a knowledge of the conditions which ought to surround them in their school life.

One fruitful resource for the inculcation of a habit of industry is neglected or overlooked by many teachers—the occupation

known as "helping teacher." Children love to stay after school hours and do any sort of work with the teacher. She is less of a teacher and more of a friend then seemingly, though in reality more of a teacher, oftentimes, than when holding a book or wielding a pointer. The actual work which a number of children can do under the inspiration of good will is no small amount. It is a power which might be turned to account in favor of neatness, cleanliness, artistic surroundings, and sociability. School can be made a more home-like place by means of it, and that half-hour of real work in cleaning boards, tidying closets, tending gardens, putting up decorations or preparing work may amount to more in the forming of a life habit of industry than the five hours of the school day.



Chapter VII.

SELF-EXPRESSION IN THE SCHOOL-ROOM.

BEFORE entering upon a discussion of ways and means to aid the child in his self-expression, we must admit the necessity of it; we must admit that it is absolutely essential to the growth of body, mind, and soul. That self-expression in physical activity is necessary to the development of the body we can readily comprehend, and we ought to see quite as plainly how correspondingly necessary it is to the development of mind and soul. Indeed, most of us have grown familiar enough with school psychology to consider the fact that impressions and concepts are deepened and clarified by expression an old story; but we are not quite as well acquainted with this same truth in the child's soul growth.

Kindergartners tell us that the soul of the child must grow in grace by constant self-expression in right-doing. We readily agree with this when we hear or see the words, and give our entire assent to the proposition that self-expression is necessary to the growth of body, mind, and soul if "the individuality of a child, the kernel of its personality, the divine thought in it, is to blossom forth." But here again, as often before, we run against a blank wall of difference between theory and practice, between preaching and performing, knowing and doing. How do we put this truth, to which we subscribe, into use among our children? How much opportunity do we give body, mind, and soul to express themselves in daily walk and conversation?

Natural self-expression in bodily activity would result in perfect physical development; in mental activity, in perfect and symmetrical growth; in moral activity, in complete and unselfish living, given a perfect environment. Such is the ideal toward which we should strive, liv-



ing up to our light as far as conditions will allow.

Repression of expression in bodily activity results, as we all know, not only in imperfect physical development, but in a misdirection of activity which reacts on mental and moral states; repression of expression in mental activity results in dulled and perverted mental powers; repression of expression in moral activity results in what we may broadly term wrong-doing. Now, when unhealthy bodies, mischievous tendencies, dulled mental powers, and divers and sundry kinds of wrong-doing are ever present in schoolrooms, it is safe to say that repression of expression is a common state of affairs, and that it is at least partly the cause of this state of affairs.

Even if we had never read G. Stanley Hall's appalling statistics, which go to prove that our children deteriorate physically as they advance in school life, our own observation would tell us that little children must be physically active much of the time if they are to be happy, and they must be happy if

they are to grow, as happiness is necessary to children just as sunshine is necessary to plants. It is a blessed thing for them that they have the power of creating happiness for themselves out of a very little. I have in mind as I write a four-year-old child of a most poverty-stricken family whom I visited not long ago, who, in the midst of cold, hunger and dirt, was making himself radiantly happy with an old dripping-pan and a string.

The only times when children can be physically inactive in their waking hours is during the moment when interest turns the activity into mental channels. Absorbed attention is often accompanied by absolute stillness, but anything short of it is accompanied by some sort of physical movement. It is not all-sufficient that six-year-old children have their hands employed, though this is enough for a reasonable length of time, but Nature demands that the whole body shall have opportunity to assist in natural self-expression.

Note how physical activity or movement attracts the attention of children. Let the



teacher open or shut a window, adjust a shade, or move an article of furniture, and all eyes are upon her. Let one child be told to do something and observe how attention concentrates upon the little actor.

The practical question now before us is how shall we give our first-grade children more of physical activity, which means real growth, in the five hours of the school day! As a rule sitting and standing alternate, a twenty or fifteen-minute reading lesson around the blackboard, and a thirty or forty-minute period at the seats; a short recess follows and then comes further alternation of sitting and standing. In the afternoon conditions are the same without the recess. Perhaps there is in one or both sessions five or ten minutes of gymnastics, and much of the seat work is hand-work of various sorts. This is as much as has been accomplished, and so far as it goes it is good, but we must go further if we are to change the condition of affairs so as to alter the fact that children deteriorate physically as they advance in school life.

What is Nature's word to us on this subject? Suppose we could watch a group of children left to themselves for five long hours! What would they do? How would they apportion the time between bodily and mental activities? How much of that time would they sit unless absorbed in something of a very attractive nature? Would they not, wherever they chanced to be, spend by far the greater portion of the hours in active, bodily exercise? Would they not run, climb, race, build, or romp most of the time, even if there were books, pictures, drawing and other materials for hand-work where they could use them freely? Some would linger longer than others over the quieter employment, to be sure, but most of the children would undoubtedly spend more time in exercising the whole body than in exercising hand or eye.

Again comes the question, How can we let the children express themselves in bodily activity more than they do at present? I think the kindergarten can give a few hints to those who need them.

In the kindergarten during the morning exercises, instead of sitting in their seats and singing one song after another for a prescribed number of minutes, though singing is the order of the hour, much bodily activity is allowed. The children are so guided in the use of gesture that of and from themselves they illustrate the songs as they sing them, not only with the hands, but by any sort of movement which suggests itself to the child who has learned that he may express himself freely in this way. It is true that in so doing he often forgets to sing, but nobody cares, as kindergartners know that the voice should not be strained in trying to keep up with very active movements. So the teacher often sings the words which the child is acting out, her eyes full of appreciative sympathy. Some of the children sing with her, while others follow the demonstrative inventor, or themselves invent.

Many of the songs are best sung standing; many are so full of suggestion that they are sung first and acted afterwards; many can

be sung with the hands only, and in the talk which accompanies this morning music such words as "Show us," "Try it," "Let us all do that," "How would you do it?" are frequent. So the kindergartner says to the teacher, study the possibilities of the songs you sing and try to use with them the natural movements suggested by the children's efforts at self-expression through this channel.

In some schools teachers place a semicircle of little kindergarten chairs in front of the blackboard from which they illustrate their lessons. Their object is to secure order and quiet through the recitation. It hardly seems proper that a little child after sitting at his desk for half or three-quarters of an hour should be obliged to continue sitting. It is true that when children stand in class they wriggle, squirm, twist, push, meddle with things they should leave alone, and do countless other things of an aggravating nature to the teacher, who feels that a certain amount of reading or numbers must be taught in the allotted twenty min-

utes, and who desires to that end attention and quiet. But why do these little ones wriggle, squirm, twist, and meddle? Is it not simply Nature calling for bodily movement — exercise which shall limber the muscles and limbs that have been quiet what seems to the children a long time? Looked at from this point of view it seems both wrong and cruel to ask these children to keep perfectly still, and yet that lesson must be taught in the allotted time, and if the teacher is to accomplish this the children must be quiet.

“That amount of time” is responsible for a great deal. It is, in fact, the cause of many of our unconscious pedagogical crimes, and of the sins we commit knowingly against our better knowledge of childhood, because, so far as we know, we are obliged to commit them. So many children, so much work, in so much time, makes it necessary for those of us that have consciences, and have studied our profession a little, to trail our banners in the dust over and over again.

The teacher of a class which came to her from their seats, if she had plenty of time and knew that the children's restlessness had a cause and a reason for being, would not put the little things in a row and begin at once to set mental activities in action without any consideration for the physical. She would, perhaps, have some work for them to do which required physical exertion, boards to be cleared, ventilation attended to, tables to be changed, material to be gotten out or put away; she might even take them with her to the door or window for observation; she might use the words denoting action in the coming lesson for exercise hints; or she might simply give them some movements such as skipping, dancing, or running, to invigorate the body and work off superfluous steam, not that the steam ought to be considered superfluous at all, but popularly speaking.

With the idea of self-expression in her mind she and the children might dramatize all or a part of the lesson before proceeding to the actual reading which requires quiet.

All or any of the foregoing would of course be proportioned to the kind of work which had been going on at the seats; for if there had been some activity there, less would be necessary in class. I say the teacher might do some such things as I have mentioned if she had time, which too often is lacking; but still the skillful teacher will not be altogether without resources.

What she can do for the present is to allow such bodily activity as is possible in seat work, to let her little folks stand instead of sit about her, to note their physical conditions and let them have at least a moment of action before beginning work which requires stillness. Let her use any of these suggestions, or other and better ones, from whatever source derived. She can bear in mind that the attention of the class will follow the movements of anyone, even when each child is longing to do the same thing, and that often so simple an expedient as finding a word with the pointer instead of with the eye will call back a wandering attention.

Think from what the restlessness of children in class springs, what it means, and work as far as you can, oh handicapped teacher, in accordance with Nature's laws and not against them. Do not forget that bodily activity is essential to mental activity, and connect the two whenever and wherever you can. I believe that the time is coming when we will look back on our present modes of procedure much as we regard backless benches and birch rods.

In the kindergarten, when the children are engaged in any kind of hard work, it is part of the program that they should move about in any direction suggested by the exigencies of the occasion. For instance, in sewing time the worsted may be at the end of the table, and as the children want it they go quietly and help themselves. When anything is finished which can be drawn upon the blackboard they go and make a picture of it. They put the finished card or mat away sometimes; they go to the cupboard for paper, paste, scissors, or anything

they may need in carrying out an idea; they are much of the time inventing and creating. They get out work, they put it away, and they do the necessary cleaning up. All this gives them physical exercise apart from the hand-work.

A little drilling in consideration and common sense would make something like this possible in the schoolroom. A child can wait on himself very well when trusted to do so, when in the beginning he is given the help he needs, and even he that at home is disinclined to do all in this direction which his mother requires of him, will perform similar school tasks with alacrity.

Writing and drawing on the blackboard are among the best kinds of work done by school children out of class. They never tire of it, but somehow the average schoolroom never seems to have enough board room. An acre more or less could, I think, be used to advantage. Here again "too many children" is the reason why blackboard work is not more freely used.

Any teacher who has once had so sensible a sand table that the children could really use it, will never again be without one. It needs to be large enough to admit of free movement, and to allow each child a reasonable quantity of sand and space.

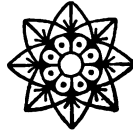
The school with a garden will furnish, in the season, a kind of hand-work which will admit of bodily activity during some of the seat-periods of a school-day.

With the right kind of teacher it is possible to send small groups of children out of the room to do a definite thing, trusting them to keep the necessary order. By choosing at first for such work the children who can be trusted, and adding later on those who prove themselves, or wish to prove themselves, worthy of trust, a teacher can send classes, or parts of classes, into the garden for material, or into another room, thus providing the seat-work period with work that relieves it of its tedium. Of course this depends almost entirely on the tact and skill of the teacher. One teacher can leave her whole room when she



pleases, another's departure is the signal for immediate disorder, and many never care even to try the experiment.

I have in mind a teacher in a public school where there is a kindergarten, who in the afternoon, sends her pupils into the kindergarten and uses the blackboards and sand table in this way with excellent results, The tables, chairs, gifts, and circle are also at her disposal, and she is wise enough to make good use of them.



Chapter VIII.

LITERATURE FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN.



HERE is hardly room nowadays for a discussion of the kind of stories which should be used in school work. Most of us are agreed that school life is too short for anything but the best, and that the real world literature makes better story material for young children than anything else; and many of us make free use of Greek, Roman, Norse, and other myths, of fables and folk-stories, and of classic tales from writers ancient and modern.

The average normal child has a healthy appetite for stories of fact and fancy, and his teacher finds in them the kind of subject-matter for reading, writing, drawing and language work which she and he



need. There is a child, however, with whom many public school teachers are very familiar, who is not altogether average and normal as we use those terms. He is usually of foreign parentage, from a home where little or no English is spoken, and where there is nothing that savors of an intellectual life. This child is not always athirst for the plan of literature work which we have laid down for him. He will not listen with anything worthy of the name of attention even to *Hiawatha*, *Pegasus* or the *Ugly Duckling*. He is listless or restless while the story which absolutely absorbs his English or American schoolmates is being told. He cannot tell even a part of the story after hearing it, and he cannot draw a picture of it, because it has formed no definite image in his mind. This is not because he has not the intellectual faculties and possibilities of the other child, but because these faculties and possibilities are not so highly developed in him. The story goes over his head, it is beyond him, perhaps because of the lack of development and perhaps because of the



language barrier. With him the teacher must begin further back. He needs stories with clearer outlines and less detail; they must, perhaps, be told in simpler language, and it is more than possible that they need more dramatic fire on the part of the narrator. I have known a child to whom Persephone, Baldur and Rip Van Winkle were offered in vain, to respond with his whole soul to the Three Bears, with its simplicity and repetition.

The child does not live, who is in possession of his normal faculties, who cannot be reached by story-telling, if the right story be offered and well told. Do not be discouraged, then, when Emil and Gustave do not seem to care for the story which so greatly interests Benjamin Franklin and little De Puyster, but go back a little and bring them gradually up to their school-mates' level; that is, if you can. Just how far individual needs and necessities can be considered in this matter is each teacher's own problem, and each will work it out according to her own ability and originality.



For all first grade children stories with strong outlines are needed, stories in which thoughts and events stand out clearly, so clearly that they can be stated in a few words if necessary. These are the tales which children can most readily tell in chalk, sand, clay or language. These are the tales which make the best reading lessons, and which can be most easily reproduced in writing. Æsop's fables are good examples of the stories which have strong outlines, and the "Seven Little Sisters," excellent as they are, of the opposite kind. The teacher's skill in telling the story can bring out these outlines, and hence the tale that is to be told must be studied, thought over and rehearsed if it is to be a success.

Benjamin Franklin and De Puyster, who have had stories told them at home since they were old enough to listen, will probably be interested in any sort of tale which the teacher chooses to tell, it matters not how she tells it; but Gustave and Emil will have to be considered, and it is for them that the teacher's dramatic power will have



to be cultivated and employed. Benjamin Franklin will enjoy it as an added interest to the story, and Emil can be drawn by means of it towards his level. Changes of tone and voice, mimicry, dramatic pauses, thrilling whispers, impressive knocks and mysterious scratchings, are powers for good in the story-teller's possession. Let her not only use them wisely herself but encourage similar dramatic tendencies in the children themselves.

There is such a wealth of material at hand that the temptation now is to tell too many stories. Fewer of them, more carefully prepared and told, would be productive of much better results. Part of a story told and a part held in anticipation is often a good practice. The most important part of the teacher's literature work, apart from dramatic telling, is the choice of the material to be used. Each teacher will know best what she needs for her own children, how much she can use to advantage, where she had better begin, and what she can hope to accomplish. She must put herself in posses-



sion of all the story material she can find and then carefully sort out and select from her accumulation just what the occasion requires, and in this choice she will, of course, be guided by her purpose in telling stories, whatever that may be. One teacher may have the idea of subject-matter for reading and writing lessons only; another may go further and consider her stories as helps to expression in language and drawing; another may tell her tales with a distinctly¹ moral purpose; and still another may have all of these things in her mind as well as the thought that in giving the child the world literature she is helping him to self-expression, self-knowledge, and through the outer revealing to himself his own inner life.

In literature study in the schools perhaps the object which will appeal most directly to the practical mind is the building up of a love for good reading, which the child can carry with him through life, and which will open to him, whatever his calling, an avenue to culture, thought, and intellectual delight. It is quite pos-



sible to train a child in this love, though this is not saying that first-grade teachers can do it for each and all of their pupils in one year's time. They can only do their part faithfully and well while the child is with us, and hope that future teachers and home opportunities will carry on what has thus been begun.

The great danger brought near children by their love of stories is the injury to the mind through easy reading. A child who is left to himself after he has learned to read will often read story after story with an insatiable appetite, but he will not be necessarily benefited thereby; indeed, his mind is often hurt by acting upon material in a way which makes anything like mental effort unnecessary. The mind must grow by effort and exercise as truly as the body; and quality, not quantity, of reading is what will leave an impression on the child's mind for good. Indiscriminate reading seems much like indiscriminate eating. In its effect on the mind a mental diet of easily digested stories seems to resemble closely a diet of broths



and delicacies, such as are used for the sick, in its effect on the body.

We often hear parents say with a degree of pride, "My boy is a great reader—reads all the time. He wants a book the minute he gets into the house."

"What does he read?" is asked.

"Oh, I don't know! Anything he can get. He takes books from the library. He's had four already this week."

In the libraries child after child brings and takes away with him books, not harmful in themselves, perhaps, any more than cake or candy are harmful in themselves if in proper quantity, but which certainly will add no strength to the growing mind.

A teacher on a long visit to a relative who had two small boys was asked to read the "St. Nicholas" to them. She consented gladly and began on the story which formed the first article that month. The boys listened with interest and attention, but when she begun on the next article which was not a story they objected, and begged her to skip over to the next tale. She then and there

struck a bargain with them, agreeing to read every evening if she could read the magazine straight through, and have the choice of what was to be read after it was finished. The boys agreed to this, and all winter she read to them, striving to build up a taste for real reading which should last. Before she left she had the satisfaction of seeing Seven-year-old trying to spell out "The Hanging of the Crane," in spite of his mother's protestations that he could not understand it. He said he wanted to see whether there were any part of it he could understand. Nine-year-old asked her one day when she was reading to herself to read a page to him. He, too, was told that he could hardly understand the book, but he asked opportunity to try. The result was that a large part of "Kane's Arctic Adventures" was read to both boys, and furnished a basis for the nursery plays of many a long day. These boys were taught to love good reading in a very short time by a judicious selection of books, a sympathetic guide, and a stimulation to mental effort by the par-

tipication of their grown-up friend in their reading hours.

The teacher who is sufficiently in the confidence of her pupils to have a hand in making out their library lists wields a great power for good. Parents should do this, but, as a rule, they do not. If the school, in addition to giving the best of books in school hours and forming a taste for true reading, can, through faithful and conscientious teachers, control, even in part, the out-of-school reading, it will in the future be able to lay a more righteous claim to giving the children an "education."

There are many men and women who can read nothing but newspapers and novels. Any reading requiring mental effort is distasteful, hence they are shut out of a world of beauty, truth, and strength, as well as from the broad avenue to culture which reading can become. No fairy godmother could give a better gift to a child than a true love of reading, and we teachers can be fairy godmothers if we will. Many more men and women there are who can read, digest,



and enjoy anything good in prose, but who have little or no taste for poetry. A taste for poetry is like a taste for music, those who possess it have an enjoyment and an inspiration entirely beyond the ken of those who have it not. The chooser of literature for children should have this world of poesy in mind, and seek to make it possible for the children to enter in. Not only must the teacher give the child dear old classics which begin with Mother Goose and "Twinkle, Twinkle," and go on toward "Casabianca," "Old Ironsides," "Lucy Gray," and "The May Queen," but she must make him see and feel the music of poetry, the heart and soul of it. She has the child's possibilities and his natural and often-manifested love of rhythm on which to build. She needs a love and appreciation of poetry in her own soul if she is to develop it in the children. If she has it not she can acquire it if she will listen once more to Froebel speaking through one of his disciples, and saying to her, "Come, let us live *with* our children." I repeat, she can acquire this with

the children as she leads them along the way.

One not entirely settled question among first grade teachers concerns the connection which should exist between science and literature in school work. They frequently find themselves confronted by difficulties not always mentioned by the enthusiastic orator of the teachers' meeting, or the equally enthusiastic writer for school journals; as for instance, what shall be done when no story which has a place in real literature can be found, when wanted, to connect with a particular phase of nature study; or what shall be done when the many beautiful tales and verses which the teacher wishes to use have no practicable suggestiveness for the science lessons.

It is just possible that our new and enthusiastic views on unification and concentration need some adjusting and readjusting. It is possible that we lay too much stress on the visible and transitory connection, and too little on the great underlying unity which all true educators are striving to un-



derstand. It is also possible that we, at times, sacrifice the vital, permanent, and really educational thought to the less valuable connection. In our zeal for this beautiful continuity, this desirable unification of studies, it is perhaps well to pause awhile, before we go any further, and "think on these things."

You have heard much of the importance of telling stories to little children, and you know by experience that to get the best good out of a tale you must study it and rehearse it to yourself before giving it to them, but while believing this I believe also that a word about reading to children will not be entirely out of place.

The child in an ordinarily well-educated family has stories read to him constantly; he loves to listen to reading and besieges his relatives at all hours with his "Please read to me," until he can read to himself. Many of our public school children, however, as has been said more than once, come to us from homes where there are no books and where there would be no time to read them

if there were. As a result these children do not hear stories read and are found by experiment not to have the power of listening well or intelligently while reading is going on. It seems as though they should have developed in them, as far as possible, the same powers that children from better educated families possess. They ought, also, as schoolboys and girls, to be becoming familiar with book language and gaining the love of books and reading which the more fortunate pupils have at the start. What is done for the fortunate ones at home must be done for the unfortunate at school, if at all, and as we admit one object of our literature work to be the sending of our school children into life with a love of reading, this particular kind of training ought to have its place in the first grade. It has a place in the higher grades, but needs to be begun by primary teachers who are hereby urged to supplement their story telling with some story reading. The latter cannot take the place of the former, and the teacher must beware of the temptation to make it

do so. Some stories are better told than read; some are more adapted to reading than others; so here again judgment and discretion on the part of the teacher must be presupposed.

Most teachers are familiar with a large number of books and stories which are valuable in first grade work, but for the benefit of those who may not be in the way of knowing these books, I subscribe a list of those I have found helpful. From the list of stories which each teacher makes for herself, she must choose the few which she needs, and not allow the idea to enter her mind that having such a wealth of good things she must cram them all into the small brains growing in her schoolroom, just because they are good. The children have, most of them, seventy years more or less of life, and all eternity besides, in which to add to knowledge, so I repeat that quality and use, rather than quantity, must be her thought as she selects her stories and books.

BOOKS FROM WHICH STORIES ARE TO BE TOLD: The Bible, Grimm's Fairy Tales,

De Garmo's Fairy Tales, Hans Andersen's Tales, Bulfinch's Age of Fable, Æsop's Fables, Hawthorne's Wonderbook and Tanglewood Tales, Roman History, American History, Longfellow's Hiawatha, Paul Revere, Bell of Atri and other poems; Rip Van Winkle.

BOOKS FROM WHICH POEMS ARE TO BE READ: Eliot's Poetry for Children, Whittier's Child Life in Poetry, parts of Hiawatha, Pied Piper.

BOOKS TO BE READ TO THE CHILDREN: Seven Little Sisters, Each and All, Adventures of a Brownie; Aunt Louisa's Wee Wee, by Miss Alcott; Mrs. Ewing's Stories; The Story Hour, by Kate Douglas Wiggin; New Year's Bargain, by Susan Coolidge; Nine Little Goslings, by Susan Coolidge.

Chapter 18.

CONCENTRATION IN PLANS OF WORK.

IT is hardly necessary to prove to those teachers who will read these chapters the value and importance of a concentration of studies, or to review to them what has been done and is doing along this line. The chapter on Concentration in Charles McMurray's "Elements of General Method," F. W. Parker's "Talk on Pedagogics," and parts of Dr. Rice's "Public School Systems of the United States," are obtainable by all who wish to go over the ground for the first time. The object of this chapter is to set forth some of the applications of this theory, with suggestions and possible helps to the individual teacher, taking into account always the individual, the circumstances, and the

surroundings. The particular method of any one teacher can only be helpful to another as a suggestion. Let me here recommend to every teacher who intends to make use of nature study in her work, E. G. Howe's "Systematic Science Study" as a most helpful book. A teacher armed with the spirit of this book in addition to Mr. Jackman's publication has an enviable equipment for good work.

No two school programs should ever be alike; no good teacher uses the same program this year that she used last year, yet nothing interests teachers more than the programs and plans of work of other teachers. One can rarely be read and considered without offering some positive or negative help and suggestion. For this reason I venture to give here fragments of the program of work of various successful primary teachers.

Each teacher's choice of program material is necessarily different, and is governed by local circumstances. The following subjects selected by a certain teacher were introduced, not in the order given here, but at

the time of the year most propitious for them. They were grouped for reference as follows:

Zoölogy—Birds, dogs, fish, rats, mice.

Botany—Trees, flowers, fruits.

Physics and Chemistry — Heat, light, sound, equilibrium, lever, chemical changes.

Mineralogy—Soil, carbon, crystallization, sandstone, limestone, fossils, ores.

Meteorology—Weather reports and observations.

Work on birds can well be begun in the Fall when the southward migration is in progress, and continued in the Spring when the birds return. The teacher is likely to find in September that beyond the robin and the English sparrow the children can tell nothing of any observation of song birds, though when the bluebird, jay, crow, blackbird, humming-bird, goldfinch, and perhaps a few others are brought to their attention, concepts of these birds rise from subconsciousness to consciousness. Children like to tell of birds they know and see, and the talks, or language lessons, in this connec-

tion make a good beginning for school work. Eleanor Smith's "Songs for Little Children," in two volumes, are indispensable to the teacher who wishes to concentrate and unify. The now well-known song, "The Brown Birds are Flying," in Book I, is one to be used at this time, though experience leads me to substitute the words "wild birds" for "brown birds," as brown birds to most children mean English sparrows, and these do not go South.

Lists of birds known by the children, to which are added the new ones as learned, make a good beginning for reading lessons, and many are the games of finding, guessing, erasing, coloring, and the like, which can be played with such a list with a class of beginners. These bird-name words of course suggest the writing lessons, but experience has led one teacher whom I know to give "tree" as the first word to be written. There is something easy and attractive about this particular word, productive of most excellent results. "Somehow children always manage to write 'tree,' " says this teacher,

“while they may struggle long and ineffectually with other words.” The first word once written, the others follow quickly and naturally, as teachers know. They also know in how many instances the writing of a first word is long delayed.

Seat work in this connection will present many difficulties, chief among which is the providing of a sufficient quantity and variety of such work. One of the most successful primary teachers I know has made for years such a point of the quality of seat work, that her problem is greatly simplified. Her children, instead of exhausting their material in the first half of an allotted twenty minutes, will work during the seat work periods of a half day at one thing in order to do it well. This she accomplishes by her own power of inspiration, and it is possible that the rest of us by patient effort may develop the same power. The painting of our bright-colored song birds from stuffed specimens has been found to delight and develop the children in equal measure. These specimens are not always easily produced, but I



have in mind two teachers who went to the nearest museum and obtained the loan of certain stuffed birds without any difficulty. If museums are not at hand I would advise the teacher to apply to the school children collectively to find out the home resources, and the result will probably surprise her. Colored chalk judiciously used as a crowning touch to good white chalk work has a never-ending fascination for the pupils.

A clay bird is often made in the kindergarten out of five balls, one large and four small ones. The large ball molded into an ovoid becomes the bird's body; one ball the head, two or three pinches forming a beak, two balls are flattened and shaped as wings, and one similarly treated for the tail. Modeling birds ought to keep children happy and busy for long periods of time, and will if they have the proper amount of help in the beginning.

The kindergarten picture sewing cards of outlined birds may be used with profit in this connection, and possibly some of the stencil cards sold by dealers in kindergarten

supplies. Painting, drawing, and modeling are the modern teacher's chief resources for the seat work period, but there are times when it seems advisable to introduce other things.

Walks and talks for the observation of real birds after school hours, and in groups small enough to be managed, are needed for inspiration, not to mention the many other reasons referred to in Chapter III. This seems a great tax on the teacher's time and patience, but she will be repaid an hundredfold for every effort of the kind she makes.

Wild birds are to be found in the city as well as in the country. Every park, boulevard, large lot and yard will have its visitors during the Fall migration. Sharpeyes are needed to see them, for the little travelers slip very silently and noiselessly past us on their way South, and many of them wear the dark Fall plumage in place of the bright colors of spring.

A wealth of bird literature is offered us by such authors as Æsop, Grimm, Bulfinch,



and our poets. "The Golden Bird," by Grimm, "The Lark and her Young Ones," by Æsop, the woodpecker story from Hia-watha, and various legends of the robin and his red breast have been wisely and successfully used in various schools. Emilie Poulsson's book "In the Child's World," which is much used in kindergarten's, has a wealth of suggestiveness and stories for the primary teacher. Bound and current volumes of the "Child-Garden" will prove a mine of wealth to teachers seeking stories and reading matter in connection with the work of every season.

The study of the dog as a type of a family is chosen for obvious reasons. Even the shy and undemonstrative children will be moved to speech when the dog is introduced, and they will readily talk on this subject when they find the teacher interested. The dog-song in "Eleanor Smith's Song Book, No. II," has proved itself a great favorite (simple and childish as it appears to elders), which fact proves a great deal. Reading lessons about particular dogs belonging to

particular children will interest as the "I see a dog!" lesson never can. Visits from the teacher to these owners of canine favorites and visits from the dogs (one at a time) to the school, while they appear on the surface distracting and revolutionary to a degree, are powers for educational good. By such occasions the good-will of the child and the sympathy of the teacher are brought into active operation, both of which, as we have seen, are valid educational forces. There is much dog literature within easy reach, but the most beautiful, and therefore useful, of the stories used are those of the dogs of St. Bernard with their geographical setting and ethical significance.

There is such a variety of kindergarten sewing cards that one can get an illustration for almost any subject, and kindergarten experience proves that there is in the sewing of outline pictures a training in self-reliance, judgment, and industry not to be despised. The child's unending interest in this work will keep him quietly busy for indefinite lengths of time.



After the children learn to write, the seat-work period changes its aspect; but there is a long while before the child writes, and must be kept busy while his fellow pupils recite. The subject admits of further amplification, but enough has been said to prove that each subject studied can be concentrated and unified by means of sympathy and the cooperation of teacher and pupil, school and home, because of the earnest work done by the authors of the helpful books which now surround us, and because of the inspiration of our educational leaders toward whom the profoundest gratitude is felt by all workers in the ranks, who profit daily by their labors.



Chapter 3.

GROWTH IN SCHOOL LIFE.

RUE education is a process. It should be a growth and a progression; for there is a law of continuity in nature and humanity. Believing these things, we also believe that this law should be in operation in the school-room.

In considering the practical daily growth that ought now to be in progress in our first-grade rooms, we shall have to undertake a sort of retrospection and *résumé* of much that has already been said in these chapters. We shall have to consider thoughtfully our ideals of growth, and then compare, each for himself, the growth that is in progress with the growth that should be, a harrowing process often to a conscientious teacher, but a necessary and a wholesome one.

Attending lectures and meetings, and reading educational books and magazines, fills the teacher's mind with conflicting emotions of discouragement, enthusiasm, despair and incentive to effort. In despairing and discouraged moments she sometimes dreads hearing or reading anything more on the subject, but she knows that as long as she lives and teaches she must work and struggle on towards the ideal, and so she heroically puts the despair and discouragement in the background of consciousness, and as resolutely as possible brings the enthusiasm and incentive to further effort to the time or place where she thinks help of any sort awaits her. So, dear fellow-teachers, come with me "once more unto the breach," and let us once more look our ever-growing ideal in the face, and compare what we are doing with what we want to do, for the sole purpose of doing better work because of this looking and comparing.

Our children grow rapidly in body and mind between the ages of six and seven. Some of them are even now a little large

for their desks and seats; they are all of them some inches taller than they were last September, and their front teeth are generally missing. Side by side with this physical development, a corresponding mental and moral growth influenced by home surroundings, by outdoor life, wholesome or unwholesome, in most cases a street life of a more or less doubtful nature, by plays, by companions, by the presence or absence of books at home, and by many other agencies, has been going on. Of this the teacher knows something as it concerns each individual child, and as her opportunity offers she is fostering, suppressing, guiding or discouraging the manifestations which come within her range. She is well aware that no power in her relation to the child is so great for good as a true friendship between her and him—a friendship which brings her his childish confidence, and gives her an insight into the real workings of his mind, a friendship which makes her familiar with his out-of-school life, and makes him want her good opinion.



She does a considerable amount of "friendly visiting" in the homes of her children, this ideal "little schoolma'am" of mine; even though in order to do so she has had to shorten her own calling list, and to reduce the number of her outside engagements. She has learned that her friends and acquaintances honor her reason for apparently neglecting them when she says to them, "I find I have but little time or strength for social life outside of my work, if I do it as it should be done." Her consecration to the work the Lord has put into her hands is as real a one as if she were a missionary, a Sunday-school worker, or a member of a Social Settlement. She has learned that here as elsewhere "virtue is its own reward;" for in visiting parents and children, be they rich, poor, or of the middle class, she finds a social life with a truth and genuineness in it which the other lacks. She gets much more pleasure out of an honest talk with Johnny's mother about the realities of life than she used to get from the ordinary social call, where the

two holding converse together only gossip or skim over the surface of things, and who would often be sadly at a loss for conversational material did not the supply of weather and bad colds hold out so well. She cannot help but be pleased at the welcome she receives, and the delight which a call from the teacher brings to parents and children alike, and the understanding resulting from such friendly social intercourse is a practical daily help to her in her work. She has thoughtfully read the answer given long ago by the great Teacher to the question, "And who is my neighbor?" and she believes that to these people with whom she is so directly thrown, her first duty lies. She fills hands, head, and heart right here with all the missionary, philanthropic, social settlement, and society life she craves, and wonders why her fellow-teachers go so far afield to find these things.

She has done much since September to give her little folks the lessons in sociology that are to be life lessons. Endless opportunities have arisen and been seized for



the teaching of a comprehension of right social relationships between pupils. Larger children have cared for and helped smaller ones, newcomers have been kindly noticed and made to feel at home, other rooms and classes have been invited in on special occasions and courteously entertained, pictures have been loaned and exchanged, and any treasures brought into number one have been shared with number two. There is less friction on the playground than there used to be, less crowding and pushing in the dressing rooms, and a more careful regard for personal appearance. The boys lift their caps when on the street they meet not only Miss Ideala, but other women and girls, and "Hello" has given place to "Good morning" or "Good afternoon." Her little citizens have long ago, for patriotic reasons, given up decorating walks and fences with chalk inscriptions, and are commissioned to instruct newcomers, in whose small persons September history is prone to repeat itself. Neighbors have nothing to complain of now as the children go to and from school, and a

pleasant surprise is in store for them a little later on; for the school ground has been portioned out to classes and grades, each to be responsible for a certain bit of territory.

The janitor will mow and water as heretofore, but the children will see to it that the walks are swept, rubbish cleared and kept away, and weeds reduced to subjection. There are to be flower-beds which the children will plant and care for, narrow border beds close to the building, and vines planted wherever they are wanted or needed. Good old-fashioned flowers will grow in these beds—pansies, petunias, asters, nasturtiums, sunflowers, four-o'clocks, morning glories, and sweet peas. These will bloom until October, and during the two fall months the teachers' desks will be gay with flowers from this school garden. It is even possible, if enthusiasm runs high and the Lord High Janitor elects to be generous in his use of the hose, that bunches of flowers will be sent to other schools, to sick pupils, or to hospitals.



A Virginia creeper will be planted where vines should grow, but the responsive wild cucumber will cover up many an unsightly spot while the creeper is growing. Castor beans will be freely used, and if generous and interested parents lend a hand, as they are apt to do whenever and wherever the children are deeply interested, there will probably be salvias and cannas added to the floral display. All this will be well under way by the time school closes, for the main part of the necessary weeding will have to be done in May and June. A few of the older children will come occasionally during the summer to attend to such weeds as the flowers do not crowd out, and the janitor will have only the watering on his mind and hands.

There has grown up between this first-grade room and the homes of the children a sort of friendly exchange. The teacher, knowing by observation as well as from the confidences of her small friends, the resources of these homes, has met with a most cordial response to requests for the loan of



pictures, curiosities, books, plants and specimens. Her lessons are in consequence better illustrated than she ever thought they could be, and by way of a return for these favors various bits of good work adorn the home walls. The parents visit this room oftener this year than they did last, and there is a true home feeling inside of those red brick walls which grows as the year rolls on toward its close.

The democratic principle of self-government has so prevailed that by means of it the physical activity necessary for small children has been in part provided for. The little ones have learned to move about quietly for needed material, to go from seat to backboard without disturbing anyone, and to work by themselves in other parts of the building when occasion calls for it. In regard to "leaving the room," permission to do so without asking leave has been granted to individuals as fast as they proved themselves worthy of the privilege. The number of these trustworthy people has increased from month to month, and now

there are only a few from whom this mark of confidence and respect must be withheld.

There has been a good deal of physical exercise in the form of related and symbolic play, some careful drill in the necessary marching in and out of the building, good gymnastic exercise, and as much active hand-work and body work as the teacher could utilize. She is fondly hoping, as she thinks of this and of her own watchfulness of the thermometer and means of ventilation, that her private and particular flock have not "deteriorated physically" since September.

The school music has been of great pleasure and profit to her little people this year, for they have learned to use it. Groups of children have been encouraged to sing for outside friends, on special occasions, the pretty songs they have learned in school. One group went Christmas caroling in their own neighborhood on Christmas eve, in charge of a few older brothers and sisters. Another gave a series of patriotic serenades on February 12 and 22. They also went

out one beautiful April night and sang spring songs under the windows of friends and parents. During the sleighing season every sleigh-ride was an impromptu concert which delighted all within hearing. The kindergarten children set a fashion by singing their Blacksmith song, with its "anvil chorus," to the friendly horseshoer who so hospitably showed them his shop, tools and work. They sang their Cobbler song for the shoemaker, and the Baker song when they visited the big ovens in the neighboring bakery.

At a birthday party, where fourteen school children, from six to thirteen years of age, sat around a table on a Saturday afternoon in February, one of them asked whether they might sing, and, permission being given, for one sweet half-hour those little trained voices sang song after song, to the intense delight of everyone within hearing, from the mother of the small hostess to the Swedish maid who waited on the table.

But let us go back to the "little school-ma'am" and her work in science, who has

this year cultivated a love of nature, a power of thought, and a keenness of observation in her children which is daily expressing itself as the season advances. May and June, with their wealth of outdoor treasure, will be very different months to this flock of children than they would have been had the little folks been taught by a teacher who did not believe in nature study. Every morning the children come in with full hands, happy faces and all the joy of the discoverer in their hearts, as they bring the first wild flowers, frogs' eggs, tadpoles or maple seeds to appreciative schoolmates and an intelligently sympathetic teacher. Her desk is a bower of spring blossoms; the aquarium has daily acquisitions. The eager question, What is this? is often heard; the coming of the birds is a matter of intelligent interest, and in addition to enthusiastic school-garden work every child has a home-garden of some sort, of which he delights to report.

The reading lessons are full of spring breeziness, spring life, and spring thought.

The A class has practically learned to read, the B's will have learned by June, and the C's will make good A's in the Advanced First next year. The children love to hear stories told and read; they can repeat any tale they have heard with tolerable accuracy and fluency. They can illustrate stories by means of blackboard drawings which show an idea of perspective, and whose figures have at least what artists call "action."

The painting of flowers, buds, leaves, sprays, and twigs is really good, and an ever-growing joy to the children. They can manage their own material now, and do not exhaust their models in five minutes. The A's and B's can reproduce a simple story in writing, and the penmanship grows better day by day. Conceptions of number and the ability to express the same in figures grows by daily practice and experience, and the A class is as much at home with fifteen or twenty as with ten.

The hand-work has developed a degree of skill that has given the children great pleasure in their work, and a power over

material which exercises itself in invention. These small workmen are dissatisfied with inaccuracy or carelessness, and have a desire for neatness and orderly doing born not only of careful work, but the careful getting out and putting away of material.

They have learned to work, to love to work, and to work persistently and skillfully at anything which they have to do. School life is a daily joy to pupils and teacher, and there will be real regret in many a little heart when the last day of school comes. Their education so far has been a process; they have grown in grace and progressed in true knowledge, because they have lived under that law of continuity which prevails in nature and humanity.

Chapter XI.

WHAT THE KINDERGARTEN DOES FOR THE CHILDREN.

MOTHERS and teachers have a right to ask kindergartners to give a reason for the faith that is in them; to say, "Tell us what the kindergarten is actually and practically going to do for our children." Fathers have a right to ask mothers whose hearts are set on putting the children into a kindergarten, "What is the good of it, anyway?" and unless the kindergartner can tell the mother in a way she can understand, the mother cannot tell the father in a way which will make him feel that he is paying bills to any particular purpose.

The average mother of children to-day believes in a general way that the kindergarten is a good thing. She believes

this because people tell her so. She knows that the teachers are usually earnest and conscientious women, that the children are amused and entertained, that they learn pretty songs and plays, and make bright-colored little gimcracks for her to take care of. But just wherein consists the direct educational advantage, the intellectual and spiritual good, is the point where ideas are apt to be a little hazy. She sometimes wonders why her child should be better off in a kindergarten than playing happily at home or out-of-doors.

Now it is very hard for a young kindergartner to formulate an answer to questions on these points. She knows a good deal more than she can tell. Like the children, she can at first express better in deeds than in words. To give any simple, definite, and satisfactory statement of the purpose of the kindergarten, such a statement as will form clear ideas in a mother's mind, is not easy for any kindergartner, on account of the comprehensiveness of the subject; for it is as broad as human nature; it is nothing

more nor less than a thought and intention of God that we have to interpret.

Kindergartners are very apt to take Froebel's writings and use them as a sort of balloon by means of which they take flights into the empyrean so far above the ordinary walks of life that the mother who has not made a direct study of Froebel has great difficulty in following.

Every child has a threefold nature. He is body, mind, and soul. At home, during his early years, his body is the chief object of care and solicitude, mind and soul being allowed to develop pretty much as they will, at first. In school the mind gets most of the attention, body and soul being largely left out of calculation. Now, if it were not true that the child has a threefold nature, it would be all-sufficient to give him good physical care during the first six years, and then to send him to school to have his mind trained. If in the one child body, mind, and soul did not dwell together during life as an inseparable unity, the old way of caring for body at home, mind at school, and



soul at Sunday school, would do very well, and there would be no need of kindergartens. But the child has a growing mind and soul at home, he has an active body and a forming character (another name for soul) at school, he takes his restless body and inquiring mind with him to Sunday school. He has this threefold nature, and as yet the kindergarten is until recently the only educational institution which recognizes it and strives to educate it.

Whatever the kindergarten gives a child, whether of song, story, work, or play, takes into account the active body, the unfolding mind, and the growing character or soul.

The best educators, ancient and modern, agree that the forming of character, which implies a power to act rightly, efficiently, and wisely, is the end and aim of true education. Teachers to-day are beginning to put this thought into practical daily use. The child is not to learn simply that he may know, but that he may do, and through doing what is wise and right, build up the character which is to make him what he can

be in time and for eternity. All hand-work and manual training are means to this end. The quantity of clay, paper, wood, or iron work that a boy turns out is nothing in itself; but the power developed and the character formed by the conscientious doing of it amounts to a great deal. It is much that head and hand, working skillfully together, enable the child to express himself in noble doing and right living.

In the ideal school the child works with his hands and with his head, not only for the sake of what hands can do and heads can know, but especially for the sake of the character developed by these means, for the sake of becoming a useful, right-doing man.

All admit the uselessness of culture without character, hence the school that does not make the forming of character its chief aim is not what it ought to be, not what it can be, nor what it will be when the kindergarten spirit and principle enters into it universally; for in the kindergarten the forming and developing of character is the chief aim. The kindergartner cares much more about

making a child helpful, kind, and considerate, than about the number of mats he weaves, though the weaving of mats is one means toward this very end. Her child-gardening does not consist in raising crops of paper chains, clay birds' nests, colored mats, and sewing cards, but in bringing to flower growths of kindness, courtesy, industry, helpfulness, and unselfish action. She has to get out of her garden plot many weeds of selfishness, stubbornness, fretfulness, idleness, and the like; but she does not so often pull them up by the roots (a dangerous thing to do when seeds are sprouting) as crowd them out with flower seeds.

Everything must have a beginning. If character is the end of education, if it can be developed, formed, and built up by right teaching, there is a good reason for beginning at the beginning and sending a child to the kindergarten where such teaching is the rule.

How is the threefold nature developed? The body is developed by happy, whole-

some, hearty play, plenty of exercise and activity of every sort, marching, singing, gardening, gymnastics, and outdoor excursions, so ordered that mind and soul grow by their use.

The mind is developed by the Gifts and Occupations, which involve bodily activity and are made a means of character building.

The soul is developed by constant exercise in right-doing. The kindergartner believes that the soul as well as body or mind grows by exercise; that to become unselfish a child must act unselfishly; that to become kind he must have constant exercise in acts of kindness. Here as elsewhere, he must "learn through doing."

Every child has in him powers, possibilities, and capacities that are his alone, and unlike those of any other human being. He is like the seed which contains all of the future plant. In the right soil, with the right amount of air, sun, and rain, the seeds of power will grow and the child will become what God meant him to be. While at home, a child has the right soil, sun, air,

and rain, perhaps. His parents are willing that he should be an individual, and in the happy freedom of a home atmosphere he grows and expands naturally during his first three or four years. If he goes to a kindergarten this kind of growth will go on, for there is a place in the child-garden that is his alone. He is no more expected to be the child his neighbor is, or to do the exact thing his neighbor does, than two flowers growing side by side in a real garden are expected to put forth the same number of leaves and blossoms. Each child has opportunity to develop what is in him.

But suppose, as the years go on, he does not go to the child-garden, which has been tried and proved to have the best soil, the right amount of sun, air, and rain, and where the gardener has been trained for child-culture? He will be very like a flower in tolerably good soil, with chance amounts of sun, air, and rain, in the care of a more or less skillful but untrained gardener.

The kindergarten stands for individual development; and knowing it, you will at

least wish your child to have the training for a year or two, even if he does go to a public school later on, where the large number of children makes class-work necessary. At least you will put the tender little slip in the right soil and in a sheltered, sunny garden, even if it has to be transplanted to the open prairie later, to grow there as best it can.

Another reason for placing a child in a kindergarten is that he must and will have the companionship of other children. It is right that he should. Man is by nature a social being, and a child can no more be happy without the companionship of his equals than his father can. In the kindergarten world, where he finds the society he craves, he gets his first lessons in citizenship, in songs, stories, games, and work. These lessons are especially emphasized in the games he plays, as the principle underlying them is largely sociological. A child comes to the kindergarten from a home where for a long time he has been the center of a not always wise thought and observation. This

is more or less true of all children, but especially true of an only child. He at once finds himself one of a number. While tenderly watched and cared for, he is of no more importance than any other; and yet the games cannot be carried to their happiest issue unless he does his part, unless everybody plays. When he refuses to play, as he often does at first, he is not allowed to reap the benefit of the united play of the others. This, of course, is after the first strangeness is worn off; for he is always allowed to be a guest and a looker-on for a while if he wishes it; but he early learns in a small way that he must do his share of work in the world, whatever it may be.

The change from home to school is a hard one for many children. To a shy, sensitive or nervous child the strain is often a great one. Even the normally hearty and healthy child, who goes gladly to school the first day, finds, after the novelty wears off, that life is a very different thing all of a sudden from what it used to be. From a home life, where he could move about at

will, speak when he pleased, rest when he was tired and change his mental attitude whenever he liked, he is plunged at once into a place where he must sit still, stop talking, work whether he feels like it or not, and keep his attention fixed in certain directions. It is time he should do these things, but they are all so new that it usually takes him some time to get mentally and physically adjusted to the new conditions. Often the process is a painful one to pupil and to teacher.

To the kindergarten child entrance into school life is but a step, for he has acquired habits of obedience, order, self-control and industry. Accustomed to the few simple rules of the kindergarten, he comes at once under the necessary discipline of school life. He is used to doing things in an orderly way and at the right time. He has learned to work quietly at whatever is given him to do. He has been taught something of the importance of punctual and regular attendance, or, rather, his mother has, if the kindergartner has done her duty; and best



of all, he has learned to work. The kindergarten is the wisest combination of work and play. At first, to the little four-year-old, it seems all play; but it glides naturally and easily into such real, earnest work as gives a child a power of application that he cannot possibly get at home, where the work given him must necessarily be haphazard and desultory.

The kindergarten child who works industriously at his paper-folding or clay-modeling because he likes it, will go into school with a habit of work that he will put into practice in his reading and writing. He has learned to observe, to think, to copy, to work. The other children have all this to learn, as well as the required amount of reading and writing.

Aside from the work of school preparation done for a child by the awakening and exercising of all his faculties, a good kindergarten sends him into school life with clear concepts of form, color, number, position, direction and other qualities learned from objects. He has, moreover, an inclination

to try and a power to do whatever work is put into his hands. His originality has been allowed to express itself and has grown thereby. He has learned to talk by talking, and so is able to express himself with some degree of clearness. The teacher seldom gets from a kindergarten child the well-known public school answer, "I dunno."

The child who goes to a good kindergarten is indeed a happy one. His threefold nature is being daily fostered, cherished and allowed to grow. His character is being so built up that he is learning to find his happiness in right-doing and unselfish living. He is learning this by means of the play that is as natural to him as breathing. He is allowed to express his inmost self freely, to do what he can do, to try his own experiments and find out things for himself. He has the joy of companionship with other children, and learns from them the lessons of each for all and all for each, that are to develop into a practical brotherhood of man. He is not only being led on the best possible path from home to school; he is not only

being prepared for school, but he is daily being made happier in his home life, being fitted for later life, being prepared for eternity.

To sum up briefly:

1. The kindergarten develops the three-fold nature of the child.

2. Its object is the formation of character by means of an harmonious development of body, mind and soul.

3. This is accomplished by means of play, childlike work and constant exercise in right-doing.

4. The kindergarten recognizes and seeks to develop the individuality of each child.

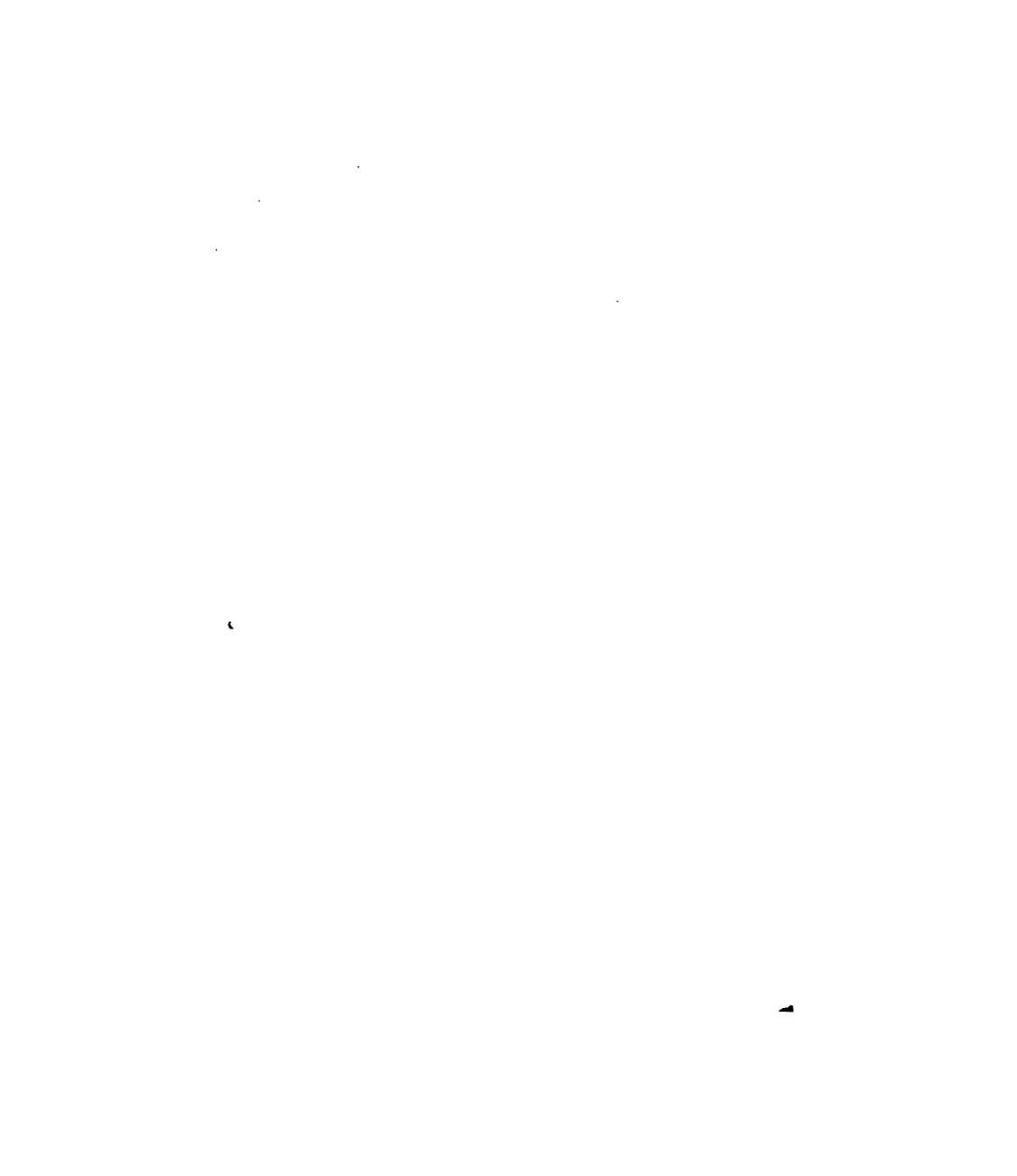
5. It furnishes him with the companionship of his equals, through whom he gets his first lessons in citizenship.

6. It affords the best transition from home to school life.

7. It provides the best preparation for school life.

8. It strives to prepare the child not only for time, but for eternity, by enabling him to grow into what he can be and what God meant him to be.





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